

ALL HANDS



Magazine of the U.S. Navy

July 1998

Surface Warfare

Arabian Gulf intercept ops

Life in the belly of an amphib

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Photo by PH2 Felix Garza

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ALL HANDS

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USS *Arleigh Burke* (DDG 51) makes ESWS qualification priority No. 1.

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On the morning of June 3, 1898, a U.S. Navy lieutenant and his crew of seven drove a broken-down, unarmed collier into a heavily defended Cuban harbor – and tried to sink her.

40 Chief has the Conn

USS *Ashland* (LSD 48) Sailors take the conn during a recent Mediterranean deployment.



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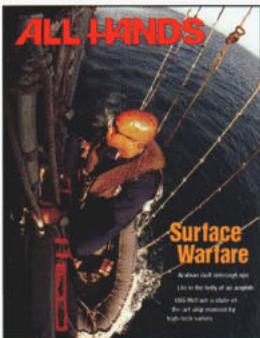
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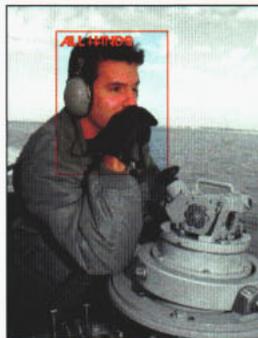
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On the Cover

OS2 (SW) Christopher Pierce, USS *Crommelin's* (FFG 37) VBSS Team Leader, climbs down a jacob's ladder as his team prepares to board a suspected smuggling vessel in the Arabian Gulf.

Photo by PH2 Jason Carter



On the Back Cover

QMSN Brian Phillips of Chillicothe, Ohio, shoots a fix on a land mark while USS *Typhoon* (PC 5) pulls into Rota, Spain.

Photo by PH1 Jim Hampshire



Motto: Strength for Freedom

Breakaway Song: Bustin' Loose

Homeport: Mayport



Motto: Determined Warrior

Breakaway Song: Bad to the Bone

Homeport: Norfolk



Motto: Strength in Freedom

Breakaway Song: Wipeout

Homeport: Pearl Harbor



Motto: Proptus Et Paratus
(Prompt and Prepared)

Breakaway Song:

Theme from *The Magnificent Seven*

Homeport: San Diego



Motto: First and Fomidable

Breakaway Song:

Don't Worry, Be Happy

Homeport: Pascagoula



Motto: Fuel for Freedom

Breakaway Song: Respect

Homeport: Pearl Harbor



Motto: Leading the Charge - Everyone Else is Behind the Eight Ball

Breakaway Song: Back in Black

Homeport: San Diego



Motto: Steadfast and Courageous

Breakaway Song: I Feel Good

Homeport: San Diego

Around the Fleet

8 Seconds

The work day is over and it is time to relax and unwind. No more inspections. No uniforms. No leading petty officers in your face. No mandatory deadlines. No field days. No duty. No orders. Just a little peace and quiet. Right? For some, maybe. But not for Aviation Maintenance Administrationman Airman (AZ) Rex Mancuso. He's on his way to his second job — as professional bull rider.

Originally from Amarillo, Texas, Rex is a member of the Professional Bull Riders Association (PBR) and the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA). "Riding

bulls is like nothing you will ever try. It's pure adrenaline and a touch of fear," Mancuso said. Assigned to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 84, he has been in the Navy since December 1996.

When asked to comment on the art of bull riding, Mancuso was adamant, "That eight-second ride is only a small part of the bigger picture. There are miles of driving and hours of training. When that bull is bucking and spinning 2,000 pounds of loose hide, all you

have to keep you up is your grip and a loose rope. Bull riding is ninety-eight percent mental. It comes down to who wants it more."

Ride 'em Cowboy! Rex Mancuso competes in the "Super Bull" in Amarillo, Texas.

Mancuso went to college on a rodeo scholarship and has won numerous competitions. It is a safe bet that he will always be somewhere in the top 15. Upon completion of his current tour, Mancuso plans to get out of the Navy and compete on the professional rodeo circuit. That means more long drives and three to four rodeos a week. But Mancuso said it will all be worth it when he makes it to the PRCA World Finals in Las Vegas, Nevada. "I plan to win the world bull riding finals."

Mancuso's advice to others: "Don't be afraid to chase your dreams or be whatever it is you want to be, but don't be afraid to pay the price."

Story by YN1 Tom Hussey, Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 84

Anthrax vaccination program progressing

More than 10,000 Sailors have been inoculated since Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen's announcement that all military personnel deployed to the Arabian Gulf will get anthrax vaccinations.

Biological weapons are maintained by several countries around the world. Use of these weapons could cause widespread illness among unprotected military forces. Anthrax is one of the most-deadly biological agents in use today. It is highly lethal and easy to produce in large quantities and as a weapon. It can also be spread over a large area quickly. There are no known cases of un-inoculated persons surviving an exposure to the anthrax spore. Symptoms, which appear within hours of exposure, include fever, cough, respiratory problems and severe shock.

By being fully vaccinated the chances of survival are greatly increased.

The immunization program consists of a series of 6 inoculations over an 18-month period, followed by an annual booster. Although the level of protection increases with each shot in the series, the full complement of 6 shots is required for full protection.

More information on the anthrax vaccine can be found on the web at http://www.defenselink.mil/other_info/protection.html#Anthrax

Story by JO2 Jeremy Allen, All Hands.



Photo courtesy of the Mancuso family



LDO/CWO applications due Aug. 1

Eligible first class, chief and senior chief petty officers are encouraged to apply for FY00 Limited Duty Officer (LDO) and/or Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) programs. Applications are due to BUPERS by Aug. 1.

Master chief petty officers can only apply for the CWO program. If selected, master

chiefs with two years in grade as of Oct. 1 of the year in which the board convenes will be appointed to CWO3. CWOs who have completed at least one year in grade as of Oct. 1 are also encouraged to apply for LDO; if selected, they will be appointed to lieutenant junior grade.

LDO/CWO programs provide the Navy with high-level technical managers and

specialists to assume leadership in key positions. Through these programs, outstanding senior enlisted personnel may compete for a commission without a college degree. LDOs and CWOs comprise approximately 10 percent of the Navy's officer corps.

Applicants should review BUPERS INST 1131.1A for information on eligibility and

SeaBees "Can-Do" spirit docks in the Desert

Speed Boats. Jet skis. Fishing. All are images that come to mind when one pictures the small lakeshore community of Lake Havasu City, Ariz. But dump trucks, graders and heavy machinery are the reality.

Site 6 on the Lake Havasu waterfront is currently under construction. Soon, with the help of the 3rd Naval Construction Brigade of Port Hueneme, Calif., Site 6 will serve as a boat launch facility and a family fishing spot for local residents and seasonal vacationers.

The idea for the project began six years ago as a public-private venture of Anglers United, the Bureau of Land Management and Lake Havasu City. However, financial setbacks delayed the plan's kickoff. Kirk Koch, Bureau of Land Management project manager, suggested the Seabees as a possible option and contact with the 3rd Naval Construction Brigade was made in an effort to move the project forward.

Three weeks after the city council let the contract, the Seabees were on site and the project was on schedule and under budget.



SW2 Mark Johnson lays electrical conduit in Lake Havasu, Ariz.

According to LT Jerry Grence, project manager for the 3rd Naval Construction Brigade, the Seabees knew they could get the job done and done right. "I knew we had the talent and the knowledge to successfully complete the planned design. The Seabee mission fit perfectly with the project's requirements." The use of military labor is part of the Innovative Readiness Program initiated by President Clinton.

Said Koch, "Everybody wins on this project. The project is ahead of schedule due to the volunteerism of the military and the community."

When the pier is finished, the T-shaped dock will extend 174 feet into the cove at Site 6, with a 132-foot section at the head of the "T" housing nine covered fishing houses. The dock will also be wheelchair-accessible, a feature which makes this pier unique.

Because of the efforts of the Seabees, taxpayers are being saved \$250,000 in construction costs and the once rocky beachfront is being transformed into a sandy marina. Completion is set for late spring, when the Navy will pack up and set sail from the desert.

Story by LT Priscilla L. Baird, public affairs office, 3rd Naval Construction Brigade

Around the Fleet

application procedures. All applicants are encouraged to order and review their microfiche and personal summary records at the earliest opportunity. Records can be requested from Pers-313 by mail or fax at DSN 224-8882 or (703) 614-8882. The BUPERS Homepage (www.navy.mil/homepages/bupers) has information on requesting microfiche and personal summary records, as well as on the LDO/CWO program.

NAVADMIN 066/98 contains a list of common errors and omissions from applications and details on applying. Questions concerning applications, including verification of receipt, should be directed to PERS 811 at DSN 224-2531/1193 or (703) 614-

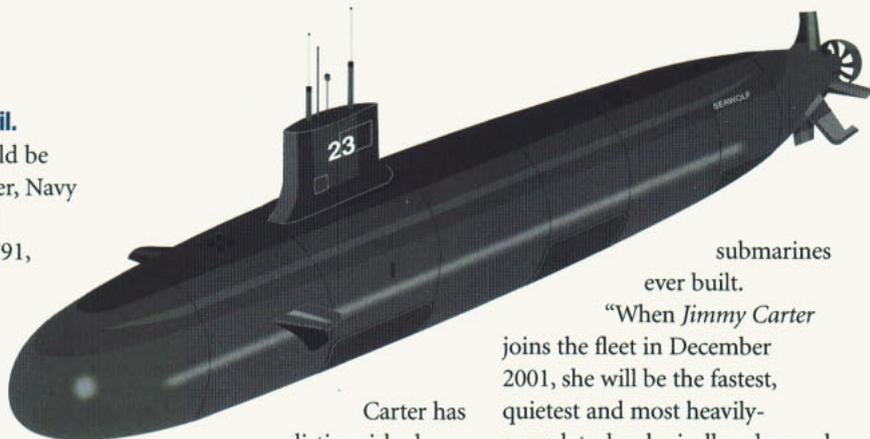
2531/1193 or e-mail: p811@bupers.navy.mil.

Applications should be mailed to Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS 811D), Bldg. 791, NSA Memphis, 7800 Third Ave., Millington, TN 38054-5059.

Story by BUPERS Public Affairs

SSN 23 USS Jimmy Carter

The Secretary of the Navy officially named the newest *Seawolf*-class nuclear-powered submarine *Jimmy Carter* (SSN 23) April 27, in honor of the 39th president of the United States.



Carter has distinguished himself through a lifetime of public service and is the only U.S. president to ever be submarine qualified.

“President Carter is a living example of our Core Values of honor, courage and commitment,” said Chief of Naval Operations ADM Jay L. Johnson.

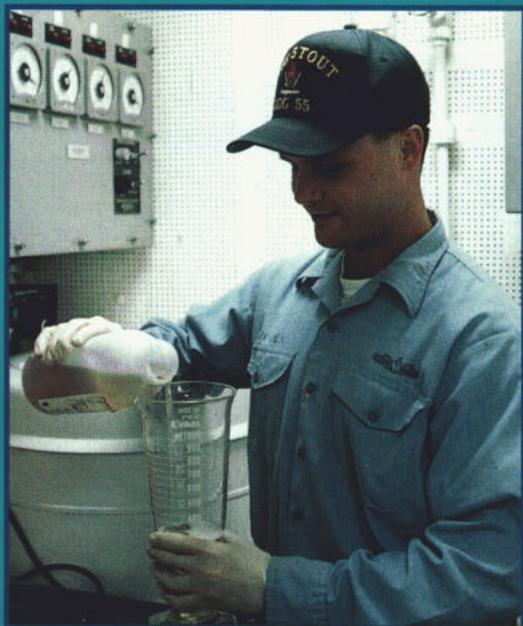
Seawolf-class submarines are the most capable, multi-mission

submarines ever built.

“When *Jimmy Carter* joins the fleet in December 2001, she will be the fastest, quietest and most heavily-armed, technologically-advanced submarine ever built,” said Johnson. “At 393-feet and displacing 9,000 tons, she represents the finest that American industry can put forward. She is also crewed by the finest Sailors the world has ever seen. The *Seawolf*-class submarine is an awesome machine.”

Story by JO2 Brigette Barnes, Navy News Service

Postcard From the Fleet



Name: GSMFN (SW) David Alec Jones
Assigned to: USS *Stout* (DDG 55)
Hometown: Stillwater, Okla.
Hobbies: NASCAR and country music
Best Part of the Job: “Getting opportunities to excel—like becoming the first non-petty officer onboard *Stout* to get ESWS qualified.”



School's in Session

How do you take a ship to school? You don't. You bring the school to the ship.

Enter the Afloat Training Group, or ATG. According to Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW) Patrick T. Therrien, one of ATG's aviation warfare systems experts, ATG's mission is to fuse a ship's crew into a cohesive fighting unit through evaluation and instruction.

"When we come aboard, we bring people — anywhere from 15 to 40 trainers — in various rates to evaluate areas such as aviation warfare, electronic warfare, navigation, communications, etc. There's not a department on the ship we're not involved in."

The evaluation process can be long and, at times, tedious.

Included in that process is a week-long, scenario-based exercise called a Command Assessment of Readiness and Training, or CART, which uses pierside simulators to generate battle scenarios.

The entire visit may last as long as four weeks. But the team will not leave until they are confident the ship is ready to enter combat situations as a cohesive fighting unit.

"I try to show Sailors the right way to do things, and stop any bad habits they might have," said Therrien.

One of the team's most important goals is to show the different divisions the importance of interaction and coordination.

"When you're conducting an engineering fire drill, you have to remember that it doesn't

affect just that area. There may be several divisions affected by that kind of damage. So when we play out a scenario, we involve everybody, so they can learn to coordinate their efforts," he said.

Using a fairly new method of standardized teaching, called "objective-based training," ATG has also eliminated a major source of confusion during exercise scenarios—interpretation. By using a standardized checklist for every procedure a scenario might impose on a ship, Sailors now have a black

SECDEF awards Environmental Security

The winners of the Defense Environmental Security Awards were recently recognized by Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen for their accomplishments in the areas of natural resources conservation, cultural resources management, environmental quality, pollution prevention, recycling and environmental cleanup.

Navy award recipients are listed below by category:

Natural Resources Conservation:

Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga.

Environmental Quality, Industrial Installation:

Naval Aviation Depot North Island (NADEP), San Diego.

Pollution Prevention, Weapon System Acquisition Team:

New Attack Submarine Environmental Management Team, Arlington, Va.

Recycling, Non-Industrial Installation:

Naval Station San Diego.

Story by DOD Public Affairs



Photo by JO1 Rodney J. Furry

ATG Trainer, OS1 (SW) Patrick T. Therrien offers guidance to Jeffery K. Foster during an anti-air warfare exercise aboard USS *Milius* (DDG 69).

and white answer to any question that may arise during a combat evolution.

"We're a lot more hands-on now when it comes to training scenarios. We build our own scenarios, then plan how we will approach the problem. ATG has helped us to figure out if we are doing it properly," said OS1 Jeffery K. Foster, a watch center supervisor aboard USS *Milius* (DDG 69).

With increasing combat technology and expanding capabilities, Sailors need to be efficient, proficient and able to operate as a team in order to maintain their combat edge — ATG is there to make sure that happens. "I'm going back to the fleet someday, and when I get there, I know the Sailors working for me will be as sharp as they can be," said Therrien. Story by JO1 Rodney J. Furry, a San Diego-based photojournalist assigned to All Hands

Tactical information
Coordinator, OS2 Mike
Langdale, of Westminister,
Calif., monitors a radar screen
in the Combat Information
Center aboard the guided-
missile destroyer USS
John S. McCain (DDG 56).



Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

USS *Crommelin's* Visit, Board,
Search and Seizure (VBSS)
Team heads for a suspected
smuggling vessel.



Photo By PH2 Jason Carter

The guided-missile destroyer
USS *Carney* (DDG 64) patrols
the waters of the Persian Gulf
in support of Operation
Southern Watch.



Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

Sentinels

[OF INTERNATIONAL WILL]

In the still waters of the North Arabian Gulf, a group of American Sailors leaves the relative security of their warship to board a small boat which will take them to their goal. Several hundred yards away, an aging cargo ship sits idle — her master paces the deck awaiting the arrival of the boarding party.



Photo By PH2 Felix Garcia

Since 1990, scenes such as this have played out nearly 11,000 times as part of the Maritime Interception Operations (MIO) instituted by the U.N. The Multinational Interception Force (MIF) has involved more than 100 ships from 14 nations and has diverted 637 suspected sanctions violators.



Photo By PH2 Jason Carter

The MIF was created following the Gulf War to ensure an undisturbed flow of humanitarian goods to and from Iraq, while stopping illegal shipments of oil from Iraqi ports.

Today, the Navy maintains five MIF ships in the Gulf. Together with ships from the United Kingdom, Canada, Belgium, New Zealand, Italy, the Netherlands and Australia, they patrol the waters of the Arabian Gulf to ensure the sanctions imposed by the international community are respected and obeyed.



Photo By PH2 Rebecca Keane



Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

(above) SR Desby stands bridge lookout watch aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS John S. McCain (DDG 56).



Photo By PH2 Jason Carter

(right) OS2 (SW) Christopher Pierce conducts a security sweep of a suspected smuggling vessel.

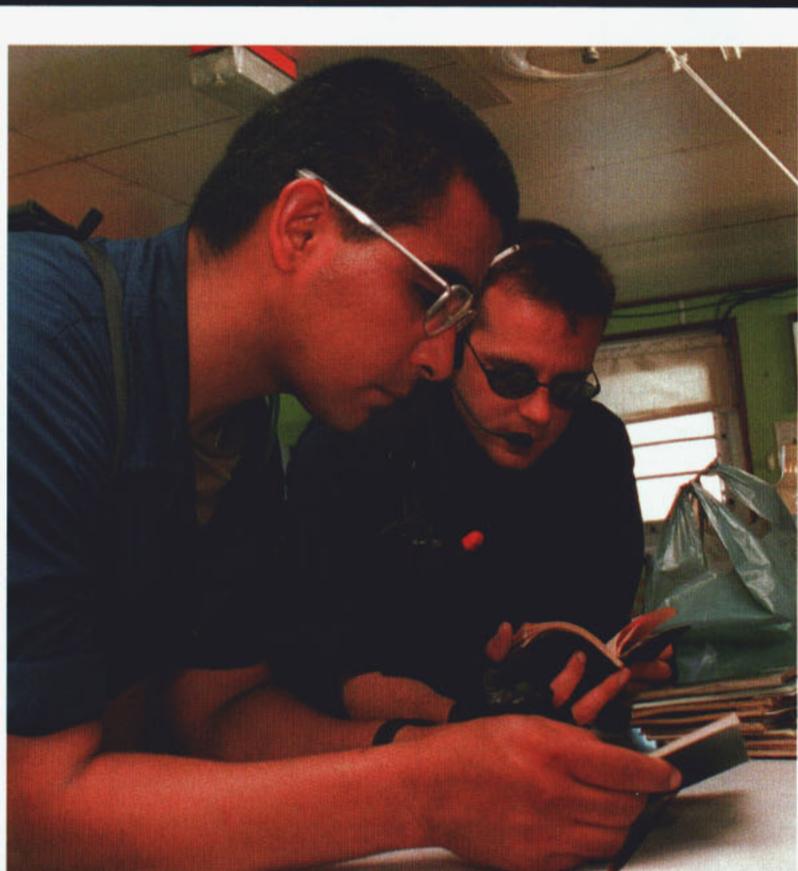


USN Photo

(above) A U.S. Navy Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) Team, serving on board the U.S. Navy's Ticonderoga-Class Cruiser USS Valley Forge (CG 50), physically inspects a merchant ship in support of U.N. sanctions enforced against Iraq in the Arabian Gulf during Maritime Intercept.

(right) BM2 Phillip Arredondo, USCG, assists LTJG Richard Daugherty in reviewing the passports of the crew of a suspected smuggling ship.

Photo By PH2 Jason Carter



(below) ET2 Richard McDonnell of Indianapolis, Ind., (right) receives information from an off-going watchstander as USS *Carney* (DDG 64) conducts Multinational Interception Operations.



Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

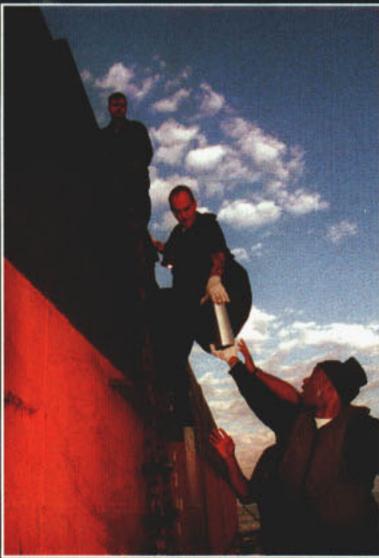


Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

(above) ST1 Anthony McCoy passes provisions over to crew members from USS *Carney* (DDG 64) preparing to stand the next 12-hour watch on an oil tanker in the Arabian Gulf.

Photo By PH2 Jason Carter



(above) BM2 Phillip Arredondo, USCG, jumps from the RHIB boat to a suspected smuggling vessel during a VBSS team boarding.

C.O.D.

Craftmasters bring Sailors

By JO1 Rodney J. Furry

and Marines to the fight

S

OME OF THE BRAVEST

FIGURES OF

THE SOUTH

PACIFIC ISLAND CAM-

PAIGNS DURING WORLD

WAR II WERE U.S. NAVY

CRAFTMASTERS. TO HEAR THE STORIES

OF BATTLE-WEARY COXSWAINS WHO



MADE TRIP AFTER TRIP

THROUGH A RAIN OF

HEAVY FIRE AND

POUNDING SURF TO

LAND MARINES AND

EQUIPMENT ON

HOSTILE BEACHES IS TO HEAR

THE STORIES OF HEROES.

Photo By JO1 Rodney J. Furry



Combat on Delivery



Photo by JOZ Richard Henson

Although warfare has changed through the years, the responsibilities of the craftmaster and the inherent dangers of the job remain the same – to get personnel and equipment into the fight.

From the pier, Landing Craft Utility (LCU) 1633 doesn't look much different than its island-hopping ancestors. But upon closer inspection, it's clear that Boatswain's Mate 1st Class (SW) Frank W. Hagan, Craftmaster of Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 1, and his crew take great pride in keeping the 30-year-old boat looking new.

The authority and accountability for the \$6 million boat rests directly on the shoulders of the craftmaster. "It's not much different from being the skipper of a large ship. I'm responsible for the crew, the ship and the mission," said Hagan.

Hagan speaks highly of his small crew. "It's not hard running this boat with a crew like this. We may only have 11, but

each one is a first-rate Sailor."

The qualification process to become a craftmaster is rigorous and, according to Hagan, it must be augmented by years of practical application and on-the-job training. "The knowledge I gained in the fleet is what really prepared me for this job. I brought a lot of experience as a boat coxswain and LPO, and I had spent time aboard amphibs."

Maneuvering a work-horse like an LCU in and out of an amphib's well deck is one thing, but what's a craftmaster to do when he has the urge to fly? With a top speed of more than 40 knots, the Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) is the Navy's high-tech answer. While LCU's have the backbone for heavier loads, LCAC's can get up the beach and down the throats of the enemy; but it takes a craftmaster with the nerve and concentration of a fighter pilot to get them there.

A Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) hovers on station before entering the well deck of USS *Fort Fisher* (LSD 40).



Photo by JO1 Rodney J. Furry

Navy Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC)



Photo by PHAN Angela B. Jones

Ramp Marshall PC3 Bice directs an LCAC from *Assault Craft Unit 4* ashore to retrieve another piece of equipment and ferry it back to USS *Gunston Hall* (LSD 44).

"It's amazing how many things you have to pay attention to when you're moving at the speed we do," said Senior Chief (SW/AW) Brian R. Lanear, an LCAC craftmaster with ACU 5, Camp Pendleton, Calif. "You have to be able to listen to your navigator, engineer and the radio and drive the boat while making split-second decisions. That's tough at 40 knots."

Commanding a hovercraft, with its \$26 million price tag and crew of five, may seem like a big responsibility for an enlisted Sailor, but according to Lanear it's a testament to the skill of the Navy's experienced boat drivers.

"Most of us have a lot of experience with the rules of the road, mechanics and leadership. I've driven just about every type of boat the Navy has in my career," he said.

That type of knowledge is a prerequisite for the job and the reason why it takes a chief to be a craftmaster in charge of an LCAC. Before taking the pilot's seat, they endure a six-month barrage of tests including an

QMC (SW) Kenneth B. Curtiss, of Inkster, Mich., completes a pre-flight inspection of his LCAC's engines.



Photo by JO1 Rodney J. Furry

Shipboard preservation is just another one of those things Midshipman 3rd Class Michael DiGangi has to learn on YP 686. BMC (SW) Hector Zayas shows him where to place the needle gun.

SN John L. Hampton shows Midshipman 3rd Class Machael Digangi some of the finer points of chart work.



Photo by Sgt. Derek Kelsey

Underway Instruction

Craftmasters use YPs to inject salt into the veins of Naval Academy midshipmen

What weighs 172 tons, is 128 feet long and teaches? Give up?



Photo by Pfc Joseph Gumber III

The Navy is using the experience of Craftmasters to teach its future officers the basics of shiphandling.

21 Craftmasters and 21 Yard Patrols routinely make the trip across the Severn River to teach Naval Academy midshipmen how to do everything from relieving the watch to cooking meals underway.

These YPs can berth 31 people, including the crew of five active-duty Sailors. The midshipmen normally get underway

for quick weekend trips up the coast, but, during the summer, trips can last two weeks. "We get underway and go to New York and Boston," said Midshipman 3rd Class Mike J. DiGangio, a Yonkers, N.Y., native. "We get to feel what its like to take Navy showers and sleep in standard-issue bunks."

"Its not a six-month cruise but it gives them a taste of the real Navy," said Chief Quarter Master (SW) Eric W. Russell, craftmaster of "Coastal Explorer" YP 686. "Its my job to bring them the real Navy."

The enlisted crew instructs the midshipmen in navigation, fire fighting, line handling and deck seamanship to name a few.



Photo by Pfc Joseph Gumber III



A U.S. Navy Landing Craft Unit (LCU) embarks aboard the amphibious assault ship USS *Peleliu* (LHA 5) with heavy equipment during exercise Kernel Blitz '97.

aviation physical, psychological evaluations and numerous hours in a simulator.

"We really earn the status that goes with wearing this pin," said Quartermaster Chief (SW) Randy T. Dickson. "We can get the Marines and their equipment on 70 percent of the world's beaches quickly and safely."



Photo by PH2 Keith W. Deviney

The U.S.-bound Marine Amphibious Rediness Group (COMPHIBRON 6) pulls into Naval Station Rota, Spain, to do the necessary washdown and inspection of equipment.

It takes an exceptional amount of confidence and years of experience to command boats such as these. It is a responsibility that is not taken lightly. You won't find many craftmaster pins around the fleet, but those you do find will be worn by individuals with the courage and skill to continue an historic legacy of on-time delivery. Navy craftmasters get their cargo where it has to go.

Furry is a San diego-based photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

"They know what I am telling them is from real experience," said Seaman John L. Hampton, Jr., a deck seaman assigned to YP 686. "Its not like they're reading it from a book. They're getting it from someone who does it everyday."

What truly makes this enlisted/midshipmen team work is the humble attitudes and professionalism exemplified by the craftmasters themselves.

"We all do the best job we can to help those midshipmen. If we don't do the job right then that individual, the Navy and the country is going to suffer. If, when all is said and done, I have not imparted to these young men and women what the Navy has taught me, then I haven't done my job."

Story by JO2 Jeremy Allen, a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.



Photo provided by USNA Public Affairs

Three of the Naval Academy's 12 YPs cruise along the Severn River.

It's the Navy's floating classroom and part of the haze

gray fleet of Yard Patrol boats docked at Naval Station Annapolis, Md.

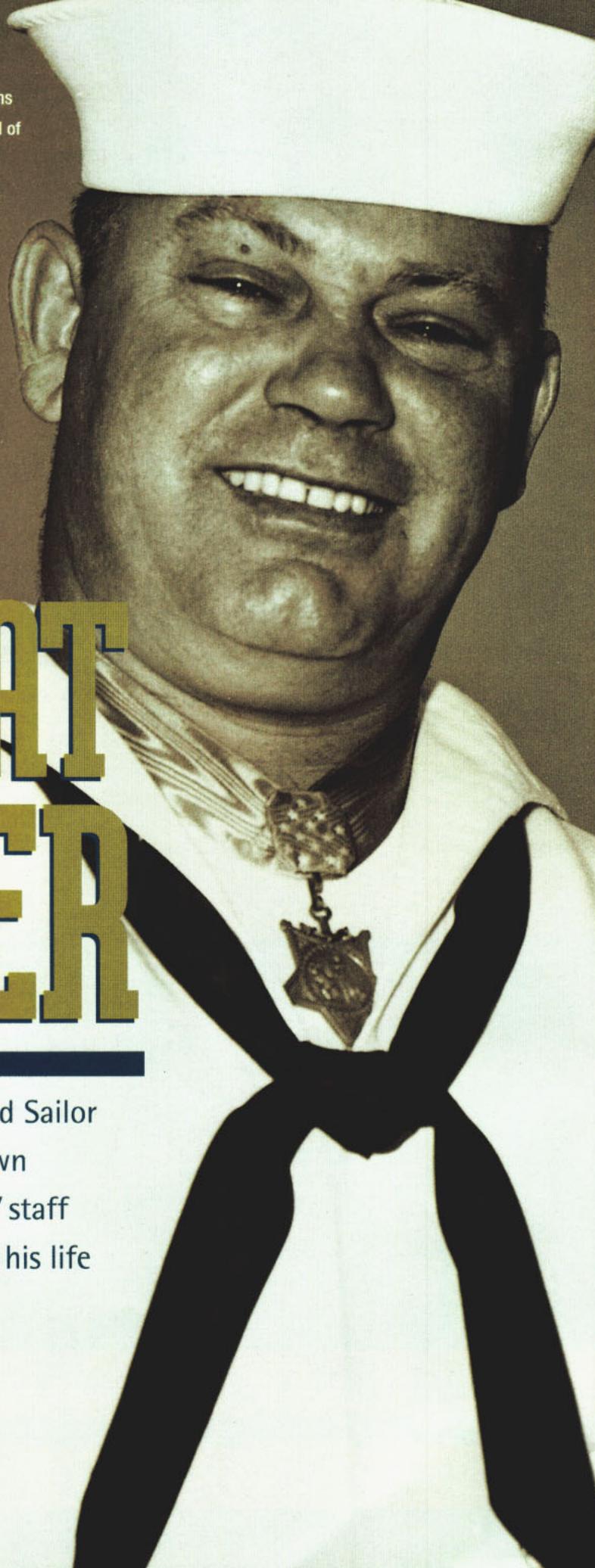
BM1 James E. Williams
after receiving Medal of
Honor in 1968.



By Patricia Oladeinde

RIVERBOAT GAMBLER

BM1 Williams, the most decorated enlisted Sailor in the U.S. Navy's history, recently sat down for a candid conversation with *All Hands'* staff writer Patricia Oladeinde about the Navy, his life and one hot day in Vietnam in 1966.





Williams at the ready.
This photo of Williams was taken during one of his numerous patrols on board the "ELAINE." He stands ready with an M-60 machine gun.

Boatswain's Mate 1st Class James Elliott Williams never intended to be a hero — he just wanted to be a Sailor.

"When I was 16, I convinced the county clerk to alter my birth certificate so I could come into the Navy. Boy was I proud. I thought there was nothing better than servin' my country and gettin' paid for it."

But Williams' first experience at sea was less than glorious. In fact, it was downright boring.

"The first ship I drew, I was the most disappointed man in the world. I'd joined the Navy to ride the waves and see the world — and doggonit, I wasn't moving. I'd got orders to an LST that just sat around a buoy in San Diego harbor."

But from that experience, Williams learned a valuable lesson about discipline and leadership.

"An old chief named Hasley told me, 'Son, you got to learn to take orders, even

if you disagree with them. That's the first step to being a good Sailor and a good leader. If you can't take orders now, you certainly won't be respected when you give them later.' Well, I got the message. Learning discipline was the springboard that helped my Navy career.

"From then on, I had the sharpest damn knife and the shiniest shoes in the Navy. That's what I was taught. That's what I believed in, being a good Sailor.

"The proudest day of my life had nothing to do with medals, ribbons or citations. It was when they made me a patrol officer. That position was held only by chiefs and officers. It showed the trust the Navy had placed in me.

"I always wanted the opportunity to show what I could do. This Vietnam thing was it for me. After 20-something years, the Navy gave me the chance to do my job."

On his first day out, Williams didn't disappoint.

"October 31, 1966, was supposed to be a restful day in the steamy, heartland of the Viet Cong. But it's one of those times I won't never forget, no matter how hard I try. I just can't.

"We were on a day patrol, kind of like the 'relax and recreation' patrol — nothin' too heavy. We were only gonna check a few boats coming down the Mekong River for contraband.

"We were just moseying on down the river minding our own business when our forward gunner, Rubin G. Binder, out of Blackbeach, N.Y., hollered to the crew,

"I had the sharpest damn knife and the shiniest shoes in the Navy. That's what I was taught. That's what I believed in, being a good Sailor."

— BM1 James Williams

Williams' crew of PBR 105: (from left) Seaman Rubin Binder, Williams, Electronics Technician Third Class Robert Castleberry, and Shipfitter-Metalsmith Second Class Henry L. Fisher.

Williams receiving the Medal of Honor from President Lyndon B. Johnson.



'there's two fast-speed boats crossing ahead of us.'

"Now we had learned if you saw one of these sampans, it was something. It usually meant there was some high-ranking North Vietnamese officer on board — and that meant trouble; as soon as the Viet Cong spotted us, they started firing."

The two boats split, one headed for the north bank, the other went east. Williams and his crew broke off with the north-bound boat and sunk it before it could reach the river's edge.

The thirty-six-year-old Williams, affectionately called "Old Man" by his crew of mostly 19- and 20-year olds, then turned for the second boat. Just as he was about

to open fire, the sampan made a sharp turn into an eight-foot-wide canal in front of a rice paddy. Williams and his crew of Patrol River Boat (PBR) 105 couldn't follow.

"I looked at the map and saw that I could go to the right maybe for a third of a mile and come back to where he would have to come out. We wanted to get them real bad. I went around that corner at max speed to cut him off — and, lo and behold, I looked up and didn't see nothing but boats and people and more boats and more people."

Williams had unwittingly stumbled into a first staging area and there was no way out but straight ahead. With bullets

flying and guns blazing, Williams slammed the throttle down and pulled the wheel hard left, creating a large wake which slapped against the hull of the sampan and disrupted the enemy's aim. Williams then took PBR 105 at full speed through the middle of the formation, causing mass confusion.

"Fire came from all directions. But their aim was off that day 'cause they was shootin' and hittin' more of each other than we was."

With some crafty boat handling, Williams zigzagged his way through the staging area while his crew returned the enemy's fire. But, the cliché, "out of the frying pan and into the fire," was about to become much more real for Williams and his crew.

"We get though this area and I'm trying to high-tail it back. We got around the next corner and by God! there's another staging area. We had to just fight. There



When it was all over, Williams, with just two boats and 10 men, had sunk 65 enemy boats and eliminated 1,200 enemy troops.

was no way out. I twisted, crisscrossed and turned that PBR. I did whatever I could to get them off our backs.”

The fight lasted for three and a half hours. When it was all over, Williams, with just two boats and 10 men, had sunk 65 enemy boats and eliminated 1,200 enemy troops.

“It’s hard to believe the first day we were out, we got blasted to hell and back and nobody got killed.”

For his heroic actions that day, Williams was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. But he is quick to

admonish anyone who wants to talk about his awards.

“You gotta stop and think about your shipmates. That’s what makes you a great person and a great leader — taking care of each other. You’ve got to think — team. It takes a team to win any battle, not an individual.”

But on one particular day in 1966, this individual made the team unbeatable.

Oladeinde is a staff writer for All Hands. Photos courtesy of BM1 Williams.

“During the monsoon season, the temperatures were unbearable. The humidity was so high our clothes literally started rotting. When I came home, my total seabag was ruined. When I went up to receive the Medal of Honor from President Johnson, the Navy had to buy me a white uniform. I didn’t have one.” — BM1 James Williams.

Listed below are military decorations received by BM1 James E. Williams during his Vietnam Service. He was made an honorary chief in 1975.

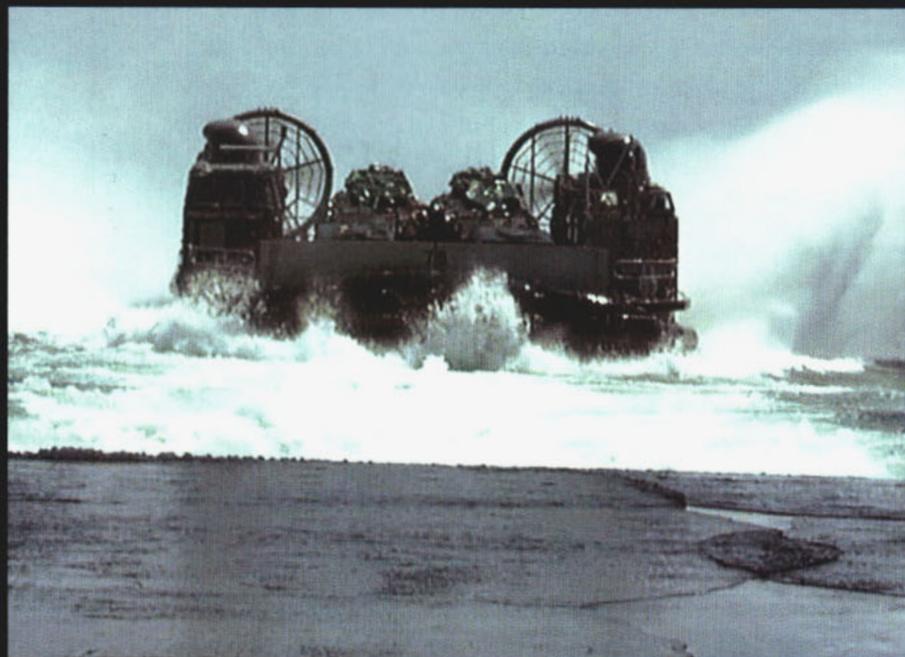


Congressional Medal of Honor
Navy Cross
Silver Star (two awards)
Navy and Marine Corps Medal (two awards)
Bronze Star (three awards)
Purple Heart (three awards)
Navy Commendation Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device
Presidential Unit Citation (two awards)
Good Conduct Medal (five awards)
National Defense Service Medal (one star)
Korean Service Medal (two stars)
Vietnam Service Medal (one star)
Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation
Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with gold star
Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palm
United Nations Service Medal
Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

By JO1 Ron Schafer

Cave Dwellers

The Navy's ability to land Marines ashore



With little margin for error, an LCAC from *Assault Craft Unit 5* (ACU-5) approaches *Essex's* well deck.

Photo by PH2 Benjamin Lewis

Imagine working in a cave — it's dark, it's damp, the noise is almost deafening as every sound reverberates against the massive steel walls, echoing

in an endless pattern of mayhem. Now flood that

cave, crank the winds up to more than 200 mph, add

anywhere in the world begins in the well deck.

an unhealthy dose of diesel exhaust and you are on

your way to understanding what it's like to live and

work in the well deck of an amphib.

These cavernous spaces found on most large-deck amphibians are as vital to landing operations as a carrier's flight deck is to air strikes. It is here that landing craft are loaded with vehicles, equipment and troops before beginning their hazardous journey towards the beach. Sailors who work the well deck and brave its less-than-glamorous conditions display an enthusiasm and versatility that set apart today's "Gator" Navy.

"Well deck operations are a combination of all the training a boatswain's mate receives," said LT Jon Lux, USS *Essex's* (LHD 2) first lieutenant. "We're doing boat ops, loading cargo, loading ammo and refueling during each evolution. We're the beginning of an amphibious assault. If we don't get the LCAC's (landing craft air cushion) out, it doesn't go off."

Depending on the ship type, well decks may accommodate LCACs, LCUs (landing craft utility), LCMs (landing craft mechanized) or a number of smaller amphibious vehicles. Aboard *Essex*, the well deck measures 430 feet long and 50 feet wide. When empty, it may appear huge. But place three LCACs (each measuring 88 feet by 47 feet) into it and suddenly the space resembles the Washington, D.C., beltway on the 4th of July weekend.

They're working under adverse conditions — high winds, salt spray and



BM2 James Moody directs an LCAC from ACU-5 (Det. Echo) into Essex's well deck.

Photo by PH2 Benjamin Lewis



According to Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class (SW/CC) Harry Hill, a native of Springfield, Mass., "There's only a few feet on either side to maneuver the landing craft, so there's not much room for error."

Errors could be costly in terms of dollars, lives and mission success.

"You've got an E-4 down there bringing in a multi-million dollar LCAC," Lux said. "They're directly responsible for it. They're working under adverse conditions — high winds, salt spray and loud noise. They really have to stay on their toes and pay attention to detail."

During operations involving LCUs, LCMs and other amphibious vehicles, the well deck is "flooded" with sea water, transforming a once-dry work area into an indoor lake of pre-determined depth. Once afloat, the loaded landing craft depart through the stern gate. LCACs, because they float on air rather than water, do not need the decks flooded to operate. Instead, they are preloaded and, once the stern gate has been lowered, accelerate their powerful engines as they depart the ship.

"When the last LCAC takes off," Hill said, "it's 60 feet away. The jet blast feels like fire. It's definitely dangerous."



Photo by PH3 Robert Houlihan

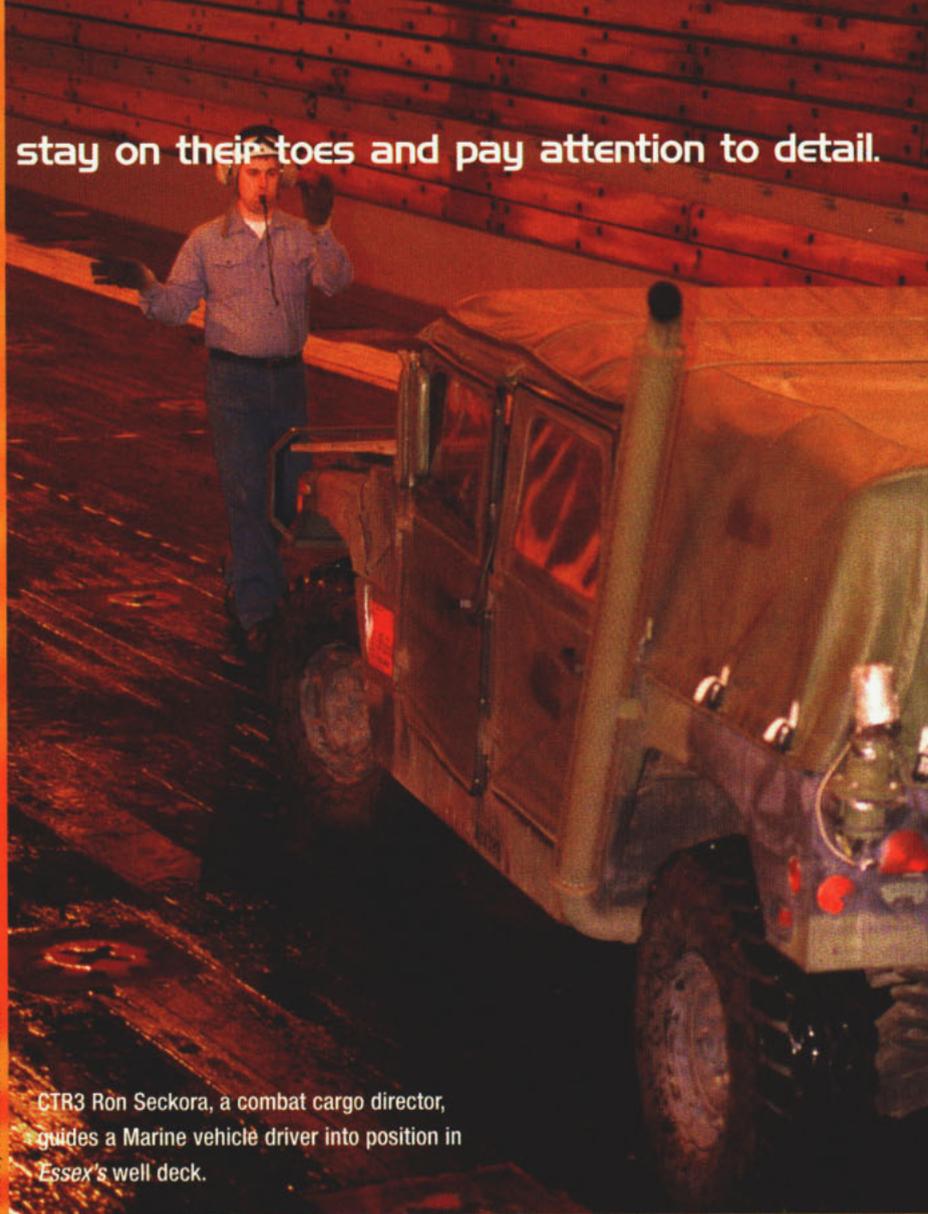
LT Jon Lux, Essex's first lieutenant, stays in constant communication with LCAC craft masters as they enter the well deck.

d loud noise. They really have to stay on their toes and pay attention to detail.



LCAC 29 from ACU-5 (Det. Echo) returns to Essex's well deck.

Photo by PH1 (AW) Charles Abell



CTR3 Ron Seckora, a combat cargo director, guides a Marine vehicle driver into position in Essex's well deck.

Photo by PH3 Robert Houlihan

What goes into a well deck?

The well decks of the U.S. Navy's amphibious ships can accommodate a variety of landing craft.

LCAC (landing craft, air cushion): 87'11" long/47' wide; displaces 87.2 tons (no load) to 182 tons (full load); 4 gas turbines (2 for propulsion/2 for lift) generate 16,000 hp.

LCU (landing craft, utility): 134'9" long/29' wide; displaces 200 tons (no load) to 437 tons (full load); 4 diesel engines/twin shaft generate approximately 680 hp.

LCM (landing craft, mechanized) 8: 73'7" long/21 feet wide; displaces 105 tons (full load); 2 diesel engines/twin shaft generate 680 hp.

LCM (landing craft, mechanized) 6: 56'2" long/14 feet wide; displaces 64 tons (full load); 2 diesel engines/twin shaft generate 460 hp.



An empty well deck awaits the next LCAC.

It takes precise coordination with the bridge and debark control to move an LCAC in and out of the well deck

As LCACs take over the role as primary amphibious landing craft, the need for “wet well” operation is diminishing. However, the need for safety and expert skill among the boatswain’s mates, damage controlmen, hull technicians, electricians and officers remains.

“It takes precise coordination with the bridge and debark control to move an LCAC in and out of the well deck,” said LT Bill Marker, Essex’s assistant 1st lieutenant. “It’s a lot like flight ops, as far as the coordination and teamwork involved.”

These “caves,” and the men and women who operate them, give the Navy the unique ability to land Marines, tanks, guns and equipment on almost any coast

in the world, projecting power and delivering one hell of a punch.

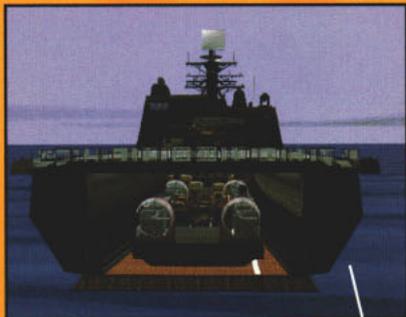
This story was compiled by JO1 Ron Schafer, a Norfolk-based staff writer for All Hands, and the public affairs staff, USS Essex (LHD 2).

New Age

Gator

The first ship of the new LPD 17 class has been christened *San Antonio*. She will take the "Gator" Navy into the 21st century.

Scheduled to join the fleet in 2002, LPD 17 will combine state-of-the-art construction and amphibious capabilities with vertical missile-launch systems and developing network technologies.



Unlike conventional landing craft, LCACs do not require "flooding" of the well deck for launch. The well deck crew needs only to drop the stern gate for troops and equipment to be on their way.



The ship's three vehicle decks will have 25,000 square feet to carry tanks, humvees and artillery. LPD 17 will also be capable of carrying multiple CH-46 *Sea Knight* and CH-53 *Sea Stallion* helicopters as well as the new MV-22 *Osprey* tilt-rotor aircraft.



The ship's well deck will be able to accommodate two LCACs. These versatile hovercraft weigh 87 tons, are capable of reaching speeds in excess of 40 knots and can deliver loads approaching 60 tons.



From the well deck control booth, Sailors will coordinate loading, launch and recovery operations.

Graphics courtesy of Naval Sea Systems Command

State of the

SHIPS BUILT FOR

High-Tech

IC3 Melanie Hawley, from Hammond, Ind., inspects the setting of the WSN5 nautical navigation system found on USS *McFaul* (DDG 74).



(Background) TMSN Daniel D. Carter, from Washington D.C., adjusts the air pressure valve of the ship's external torpedo launcher.

PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

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SAILORS

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By JO2 Jason Thompson

You name it, this warship's got it. From bow to stern, crow's nest to engine room, the fleet's newest guided-missile destroyer, USS *McFaul* (DDG 74), is equipped with some of the most sophisticated weaponry the world has ever seen.

But state-of-the-art ships are worthless without high-tech Sailors to operate and maintain them. And, as technology gets more complex, Sailors must keep pace to maintain their warfighting edge.

"Every time a new ship is built, more and more technology is incorporated," said Chief Operations Specialist (SW/AW) Mark Sansing. "The Sailors reporting aboard this ship are coming with a new set of skills to match that technology."

Learning to operate and maintain systems which incorporate cutting edge technology isn't something *McFaul's* crew members acquired overnight. Most of *McFaul's* Sailors studied anywhere from 12 to 24 months in Navy schools before reporting on board.

For example, Fire Controlman 3rd Class Troy Kelly spent two years in Navy schools before being hand-picked to work on *McFaul's* *Phalanx* Close-In Weapons System (CIWS). Now, the



Photo courtesy of USS *McFaul*

Photo by PHAN Lena Gonzalez

FC3 Nolan Pitts (left) and FC3 Troy Kelley break down and clean 20mm barrels of *McFaul's* aft *Phalanx* Close-in Weapons System (CIWS). The two fire controlmen spent a total of two years in Navy schools before qualifying to operate, fix and maintain the fast-reaction, rapid-fire gun system. *Phalanx* is designed to engage anti-ship cruise missiles and fixed-wing aircraft at short range and can fire up to 4,500 rounds per minute.



Photo by JO2 Jason Thompson



A standard surface-to-air missile leaves the forward Vertical Launching System (VLS) of the *Aegis* guided-missile destroyer USS *McFaul* (DDG 74). The missile intercepted a down-range unmanned drone during November 1997 predelivery sea trials in the Gulf of Mexico.

Photo courtesy of USS *McFaul*

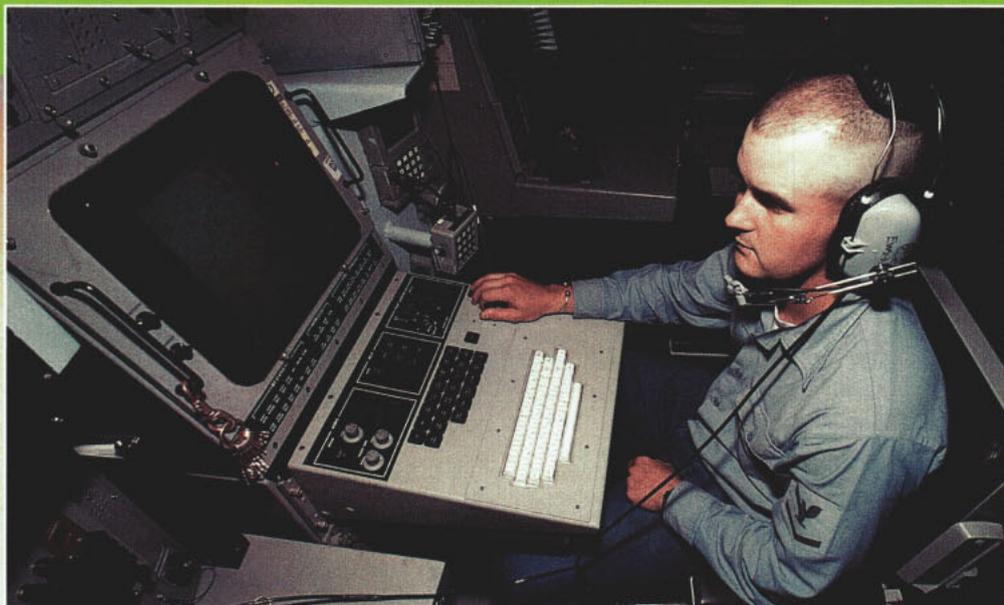


Photo by PHAN Lena Gonzalez

EW3 Christopher Mosley from Palm Harbour, Fla., detects radio frequencies from other ships with the slick 32 radar. By using this system, Mosley can tell what type of radar other ships use as well as determine potential threats to USS *McFaul*.

22-year-old Sailor is responsible for operating, fixing and maintaining the aft CIWS.

“It takes a trustworthy person to do what I do,” said the San Bernadino, Calif., native. “I work on a very deadly weapon.”

Technological improvements on the *McFaul* have improved mission effectiveness by a large margin. But that technology isn't limited to high-profile weapons systems. Sometimes it is the more mundane advancements that make the most difference. For example, in each of the ship's engine rooms a central computerized console called the Ship Control Unit (SCU) has been designed and installed to remotely monitor each engineering space, giving snipes a breakdown of the entire system. If a piece of equipment breaks down, the SCU tells them the source of the problem.

“The equipment is doing more of the work, making it easier for us to do the job and concentrate on other areas,” said Gas Turbine System (Electrician) Kevin Garner of Town Creek, Ala. “It also gives supervisors a lot more time to sit

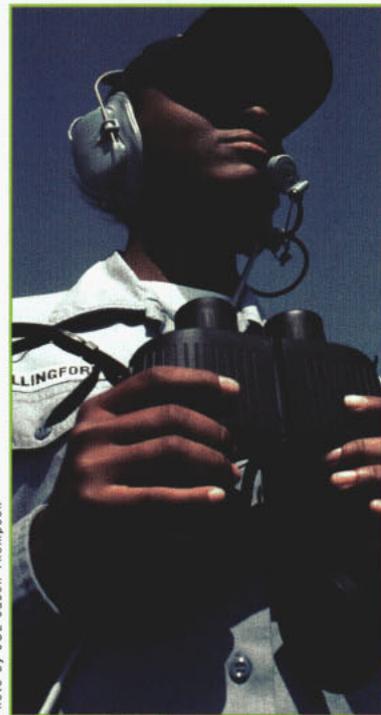


Photo by JOE Jason Thompson

SN Hazel Shillingford, a 20-year-old Sailor from New York, N.Y., looks for surface and air contacts as the aft lookout.



Photo by PHAN LENA GONZALEZ

TM1 Kathleen Walsh prepares the torpedo H.P. air flask for a simulated launching.

down with their junior people and explain how the overall system works — not just one piece of equipment.”

More time for training means Sailors can focus on working smarter, not harder.

Fire Controlmen Chief Scott Chism, the ship’s combat systems maintenance manager, said that during his 14 years in the Navy, maintaining ship-board equipment has become less labor-intensive.

“It takes a lot of brain power to fix this equipment,” explained the New York, N.Y., native. “There’s less turning of wrenches and screwdrivers and more thinking about where the problems are.”

Navy technology is moving full-speed ahead and it is rapidly changing the way we do business. At the helm of this awesome technology are highly-trained Sailors like the men and women stationed aboard USS *McFaul*. They are ready to take the Navy into the 21st century and beyond.

Thompson is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.

JULY 1998



DDG 74 is named in honor of Chief Engineman Donald L. McFaul (1957-1989), a Navy SEAL killed in action during the United States’ invasion of Panama.

According to his Navy Cross citation (awarded posthumously), McFaul was serving as platoon chief of SEAL Team 4 at Paitilla Airfield, Republic of Panama, during Operation *Just Cause* when, in the absence of effective cover fire and with disregard for his own personal safety, he entered the “kill zone” to rescue his teammates.

As he attempted to pull a seriously wounded comrade to safety, McFaul was raked by enemy automatic weapons fire. Succumbing to his mortal wounds, McFaul laid himself across his teammate, protecting him from enemy fire.

“ENC McFaul demonstrated the highest possible sacrifice and valor. His extraordinarily heroic actions, in total disregard for his personal safety, saved the life of his comrade and set the highest possible standard for leadership in combat.”

BUSTED!

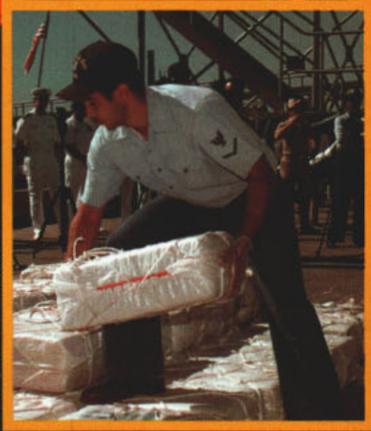


Photo by PH2 Felix Garza

The statistics are hard to ignore. An estimated 12.8 million Americans use illegal drugs each month. The annual price in social, health and criminal costs runs approximately \$67 billion. To break that down even further, substance abuse in the United States costs every man, woman and child nearly \$1,000 a year.

Something has got to give.





Photo by PH2 Felix Garza

(Above) Sailors from the guided-missile destroyer USS *Callaghan* (DDG 994) help offload bails of cocaine at Naval Station San Diego. During a recent counter-drug deployment to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific, *Callaghan* seized more than 3.5 metric tons of cocaine. Street value of the cocaine was estimated at more than \$165 million. It was the largest seizure of illegal narcotics by a Navy ship in 1997.



U.S. Navy Photo

A merchant ship in the Caribbean moments before being halted by the U.S. Coast Guard.

In the warm waters of the Eastern Pacific and the Caribbean, something is.

Established in September 1995, the Western Hemisphere Group (WESTHEMGRU) is responsible for naval operations in the region. WESTHEMGRU was created with two primary objectives. First, it allowed homeports to be adjusted so that ships would be closer to deployment patterns. This reduced fuel costs, underway time and response time for contingency situations.

Second, it reduced instability among battle group deployers within the Atlantic Fleet by concentrating ships on counter-drug operations and UNITAS. Through integration with the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) East at Naval Air Station, Key West, Fla., and the U.S. Coast Guard, the 15 ships under its command make WESTHEMGRU the most significant force in counter-drug operations in the area.

“The western hemisphere is in one of the world’s most democratic and economically dynamic regions,” said RADM James

B. Ferguson, commander, WESTHEMGRU. "But the potential for instability is always there. Here is where we must focus on different operations like drug interdiction, migration, human rights and humanitarian assistance."

Using intelligence gathering assets on land, sea and in the air, JIATF East conducts detection and monitoring efforts in the region. When a drug smuggling event is detected, the case is passed on to law enforcement agents who are then able to interdict the drugs and arrest the smugglers. In most cases, those agents operate onboard WESTHEMGRU vessels and conduct boarding and seizures directly from U.S. Navy ships.

The boarding of a merchant vessel is a highly-orchestrated and specific procedure. After being directed to intercept, a U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) will conduct right-of-approach and pre-boarding questioning via radio with the captain of the suspect vessel to determine legal guidelines for the boarding as well as to ensure the safety of the boarding party.

"We'll give them instructions on what to do with their crew. We will have them all muster in one location, usually on the exterior of the ship so we can see them as we come aboard," explained Quartermaster 1st Class Keith A. Robbers, assistant officer-in-charge of USG Leeds 5 Delta, from aboard *USS Ticonderoga* (CG 47).

At that point, the boarding officer will check cargo manifests and other documentation as the sweep team begins a systematic search of the ship looking for indicators of drug trade or traffic.

"[We look for] an old boat with new body work, slide marks, maybe a smell, things of that nature," said Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Michael A. Ford, operations petty officer, USG Leeds 5 Delta. "We

have testing gear now where we can wipe a certain area with a cloth and have it tested to let us know if there are drugs in that area."

With boarding performed on a routine basis, intelligence gathering is a constant priority and, according to Ford, crucial to counter-drug patrols.

"Every vessel we come across, we build up a data base of information on them. When we return to our unit, we send that information out so it gets distributed throughout the Coast Guard and throughout the intelligence network," Ford said.

That intelligence network, as well as a physical fleet presence, help create a deterrent that is key to the entire counter-drug philosophy. That's not to say that WESTHEMGRU ships don't ever get the bad guys.

In 1996, WESTHEMGRU ships participated in busts resulting in the seizure of 11.7 metric tons of cocaine at an estimated value of \$199.1 million. One of those busts, by *USS Ticonderoga* (CG 47), netted more than half of that total making it the second largest maritime seizure in U.S. history.

Those results are not lost on *Ticonderoga* Sailors, many of whom feel they have a personal stake in their mission.

Operations Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Paul F. Casteneda, a counter-drug air coordinator aboard *Ticonderoga* is responsible for keeping track of the air assets gathering intelligence in the region. A native of Espanola, N.M, he said that being involved in counter-drug operations really hits home as a parent.

"I've got three children myself so that helps keep me going out here knowing that everything I keep out of our country is something that my kids or my family won't have to deal with."

"Drugs were a big deal where I grew up," said Mess Specialist 3rd Class Jose M. Huerta, who grew up in San Antonio, Texas. "Being out here makes you feel better. It's making the streets safer, not just in my area but all over. It bothers me because I have a daughter. Every time we make a bust, it makes me think that maybe she'll be growing up in better conditions than I did."

Schafer is a Norfolk-based photojournalist for All Hands.

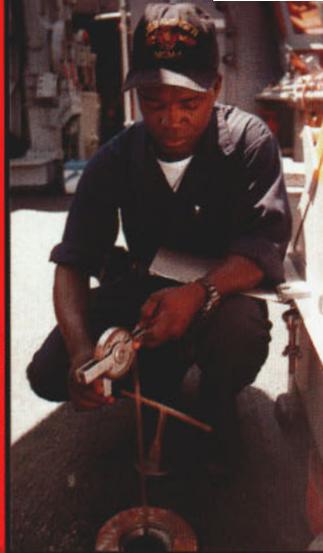
Top 10 Cocaine Seizures

	Date	Vessel	Pounds	Interceptor
1.	07/27/95	<i>Nataly I</i>	24,325	LEDET/U.S. Navy
2.	11/20/93	<i>Oso IV</i>	14,971	LEDET/U.S. Navy
3.	10/15/96	<i>Don Celso</i>	14,960	LEDET/ <i>Ticonderoga</i>
4.	10/03/93	<i>Daniel Torres</i>	13,472	CGC <i>Morganthau</i>
5.	10/01/96	<i>Limerick</i>	12,994	CGC <i>Seneca</i>
6.	10/02/89	<i>Zedom Sea</i>	12,207	CGC <i>Cushing</i>
7.	05/11/93	<i>Sea Chariot</i>	11,233	LEDET/U.S. Navy
8.	07/21/91	<i>Hunter</i>	10,771	CGC <i>Adak</i>
9.	01/06/92	<i>Harbour</i>	9,634	CGC <i>Campbell</i>
10.	09/27/97	<i>Sea Ranger</i>	8,500*	LEDET/ <i>Callaghan</i>

* Estimated Street Value \$165 million

By JO2 Jeremy Allen

Photo by SMCI(SW) Len Burkhardt



EMFN Augustus Davies performs duties as sound security watch aboard USS *Avenger* (MCM-1).

Enemy Mine

In the early 1980's, after the USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10) and USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG 58) both hit mines in the Arabian Gulf, the Navy restructured its mine countermeasures (MCM) force around two new classes of ships, the "mine-countermeasure" *Avenger* (MCM 1) class and "mine-hunter" *Osprey* (MHC) class. Both classes were designed as mine hunter-killers capable of finding, classifying and destroying moored and bottom mines.



Photo by PH1 Sean P. Jordan

USS *Inchon* (LPH 2) was converted to a mine countermeasures ship (MCS 12) in 1994 to act as a mother-ship for the mine-hunting fleet.

"The ships are made of wooden hull covered in fiberglass to maintain a very low magnetic signature," explained Aviation Boatswain Mate (Fuels) 3rd Class Thomas VanZante, currently onboard USS *Ardent* (MCM 12). "Mines that are attracted to metallic objects won't be activated by this ship."

Minesweepers may not have the most glamorous job in the Navy, but they are nonetheless essential. Without minesweepers, amphibious operations never hit the beach. "It makes me feel proud to know that what I do has direct impact on every other ship in the fleet," said VanZante, a Central City, Iowa, native. "All the amphibious forces depend on us to clear a path for them so they can do their job."

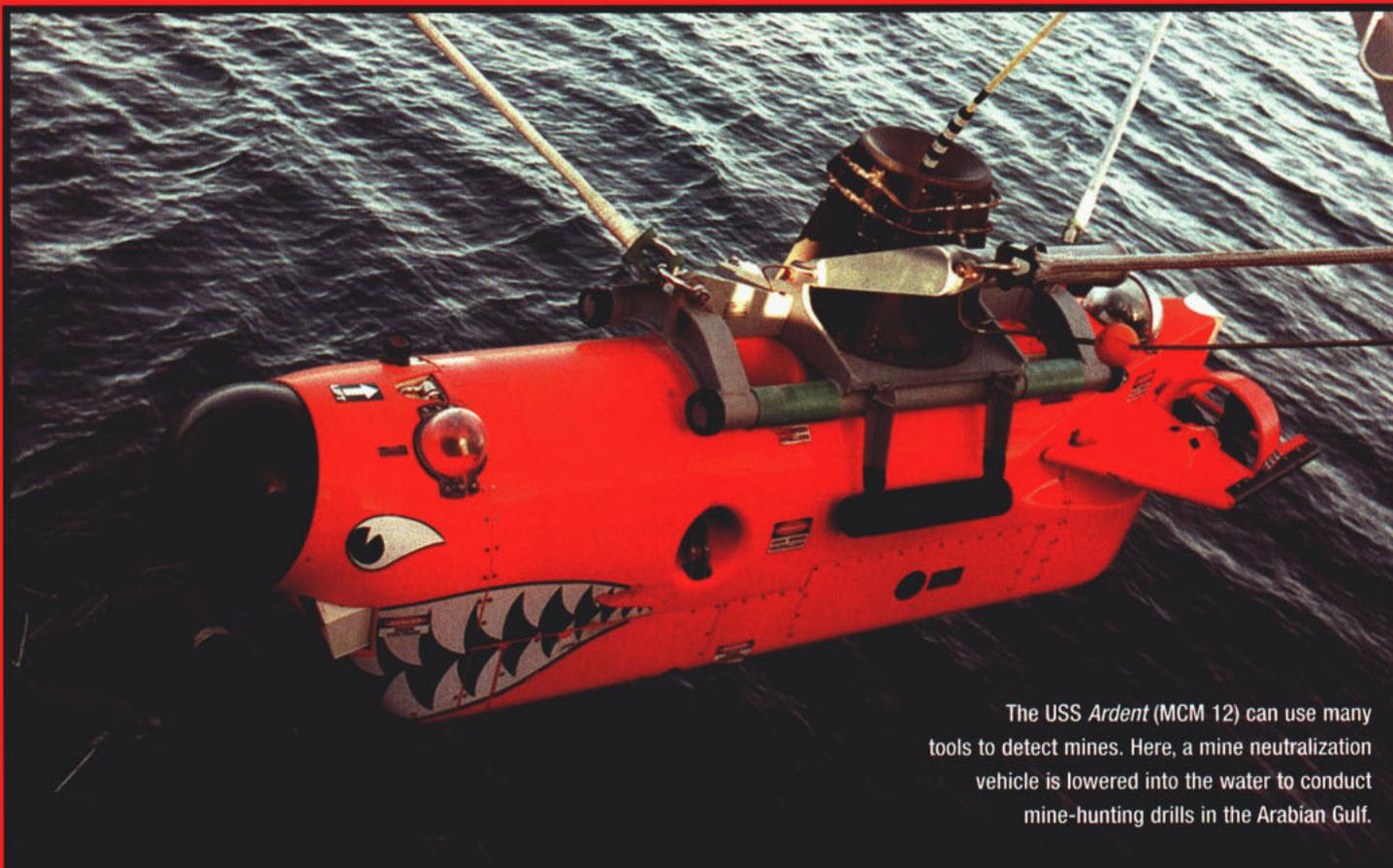
"We love going first," said Storekeeper 3rd Class Andrew D. Todd,

of Lancaster, Ohio. "Getting everything cleared out of the way makes me feel good. Without minemen, the fleet wouldn't be able to go safely through harbors or waterways."

In order to do their jobs right these ships rely on sonar and video systems, cable cutters and a remote-controlled mine detonating device.

"Sometimes we fly the little remote-controlled robotic submarine down to plant a explosive charge on the mine and blow it up," said Mineman Senior Chief (SW) Richard E. Bell, an instructor at the Mine Warfare Training Center, Ingleside, Texas. "It basically is a very large version of what you saw in the movie *Titanic*. It has a camera, an umbilical cord and cutter arms."

Mine countermeasure ships are also capable of conventional sweeping



The USS *Ardent* (MCM 12) can use many tools to detect mines. Here, a mine neutralization vehicle is lowered into the water to conduct mine-hunting drills in the Arabian Gulf.

measures. "The MCM is 224 feet long and has the ability to pull mechanical, magnetic or acoustic sweep gear behind her," said Bell. "The MHC is 188 feet long and only hunts for mines."

The Navy converted the amphibious assault ship USS *Inchon* (LPH 2) to a mine countermeasure ship (MCS 12) in 1994 to act as a "mother ship" for the mine-hunting fleet.

Mines are a relatively cheap way for third-world countries to inflict significant damage to enemy forces. "Terrorist countries can buy a mine for a couple hundred dollars and drop it out of a plane for relatively nothing," explained VanZante, "So until there is world unity, we will always have a need for mine warfare."

Allen is a journalist assigned to All Hands.

Avenger Class Ships

- USS *Avenger* (MCM 1)
- USS *Defender* (MCM 2)
- USS *Sentry* (MCM 3)
- USS *Champion* (MCM 4)
- USS *Guardian* (MCM 5)
- USS *Devastator* (MCM 6)
- USS *Patriot* (MCM 7)
- USS *Scout* (MCM 8)
- USS *Pioneer* (MCM 9)
- USS *Warrior* (MCM 10)
- USS *Gladiator* (MCM 11)
- USS *Ardent* (MCM 12)
- USS *Dextrous* (MCM 13)
- USS *Chief* (MCM 14)

Crew: 8 officers, 76 enlisted
Armament: Mine neutralization system, two .50 caliber machine guns

Osprey class Ships

- USS *Osprey* (MHC 51)
- USS *Heron* (MHC 52)
- USS *Pelican* (MHC 53)
- USS *Robin* (MHC 54)
- USS *Oriole* (MHC 55)
- USS *Kingfisher* (MHC 56)
- USS *Cormorant* (MHC 57)
- USS *Black Hawk* (MHC 58)
- USS *Falcon* (MHC 59)
- USS *Cardinal* (MHC 60)
- Under Construction
- Raven* (MHC 61)
- Shrike* (MHC 62)

Crew: 5 officers, 46 enlisted
Armament: Mine neutralization system, two .50 caliber machine guns, and other mine countermeasures systems



Warriors

Story and photos by JO2 Cathy Thomas

Even before Chief of Naval Operations ADM Jay L. Johnson made warfare qualifications mandatory for advancement to ranks E-6 and above, Senior Chief Gas Turbine Systems Technician (SW) Roger McCormack had already made it a priority on his ship, *USS Arleigh Burke* (DDG 51).

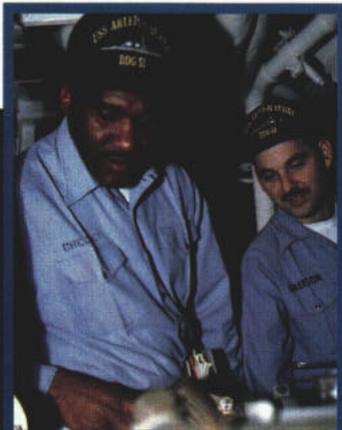
While on a 1995 Mediterranean deployment, McCormack, a Dumont, N.J., native, looked hard at his ship's Enlisted Surface Warfare Qualification (ESWS) program and realized it could be improved. His first step was to take the ESWS question handbook and break it down by subject matter. From there, McCormack

found his ship's experts in each area and had them put together a 280-page answer book that would correspond directly with the existing question book.

"The study guide has answers for each question, so the ESWS candidates have all of the answers right at their fingertips," McCormack said. The book is checked out, much like a library book, and then

returned once the candidate has become ESWS qualified.

McCormack's next step was to present the ESWS information in a way the average Sailor would not only understand, but enjoy. "I'll do classroom instruction one day, and the following day I'll do a walk through on the area we talked about the day before," McCormack said. "You



MS1 Emerson (right) and MS2 Reuben Checkley explore the engineering spaces aboard *USS Arleigh Burke*.



BM2 Roy Delosreyes (left) and IC3 Jason Burton study the compressor section of the LM-2500.

learn more when you combine classroom lecture with hands-on instruction.”

Arleigh Burke uses ESWS qualified Sailors in each division to walk candidates through the weapons, propulsion, navigation and communications systems, and any other parts of the ship they are required to know for qualification.

“We’ve had a lot of people blossom as instructors, and we’ve had young people who have been ESWS instructors get follow-on orders to shore duty as Navy instructors,” McCormack said.

As an instructor, Electrician’s Mate 1st Class (SW) Guy Deluzio, from Belton, Texas, tries to ensure every candidate understands his lessons. “I make sure they understand the equipment, and if they don’t, I ask them questions so they do understand it.”

“The fact that we hold these classes makes it easier for the Sailors. Everything is laid out for them, it’s a lot like going to a school or a university, and that helps,” said *Arleigh Burke*’s Executive Officer, LCDR Larry Tindal.

Arleigh Burke’s ESWS program has become a top-of-the-line program by keeping Sailors motivated. The ship posts a roster of ESWS qualified Sailors as well as those working toward becoming qualified. “Master chief lets us post it in the chow line, which is pretty much our Broadway or Times Square, so it has high visibility. Everybody sees how we are doing on the point totals,” McCormack said. “The young guys provide a lot of energy. They get qualified and then they go back to their divisions and tell their first classes, ‘Hey, I got it, why don’t you?’”

Another reason *Arleigh Burke*’s ESWS program is such a success is because the ship doesn’t focus on ESWS being mandatory for advancement. “I think the word ‘mandatory’ brings up a negative connotation, like it’s another ‘I gotta do’ requirement being forced on the Sailor. I don’t think that’s the right way to look at it,” McCormack said.

Instead, the senior leadership aboard *Arleigh Burke* tries to emphasize the importance of becoming ESWS qualified. “We are professionals, this is what we do for a living. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a wartime situation. Just taking a ship to sea and steaming it in peace time is a challenge and is very dangerous if not done correctly,” Tindal said. “We take it very seriously. We depend on each other on this ship. Everybody needs to know what the other guy’s job is.”

As *Arleigh Burke* Sailors complete their ESWS checklists, they also begin to see the importance of an ESWS qualified ship. “I feel 100 percent better knowing the guy serving beside me knows what to do in an emergency,” said Interior Communications Electrician Third Class Jason Burton, an ESWS candidate from Waterbury, Conn. “And, if something does go wrong, we will be able to bond closer together as a ship.”

Thomas is a Norfolk-based journalist assigned to Naval Media Center, FSD Norfolk.



FC2 (SW) Scott Johnson talks candidates through the intricacies of the fire control system.



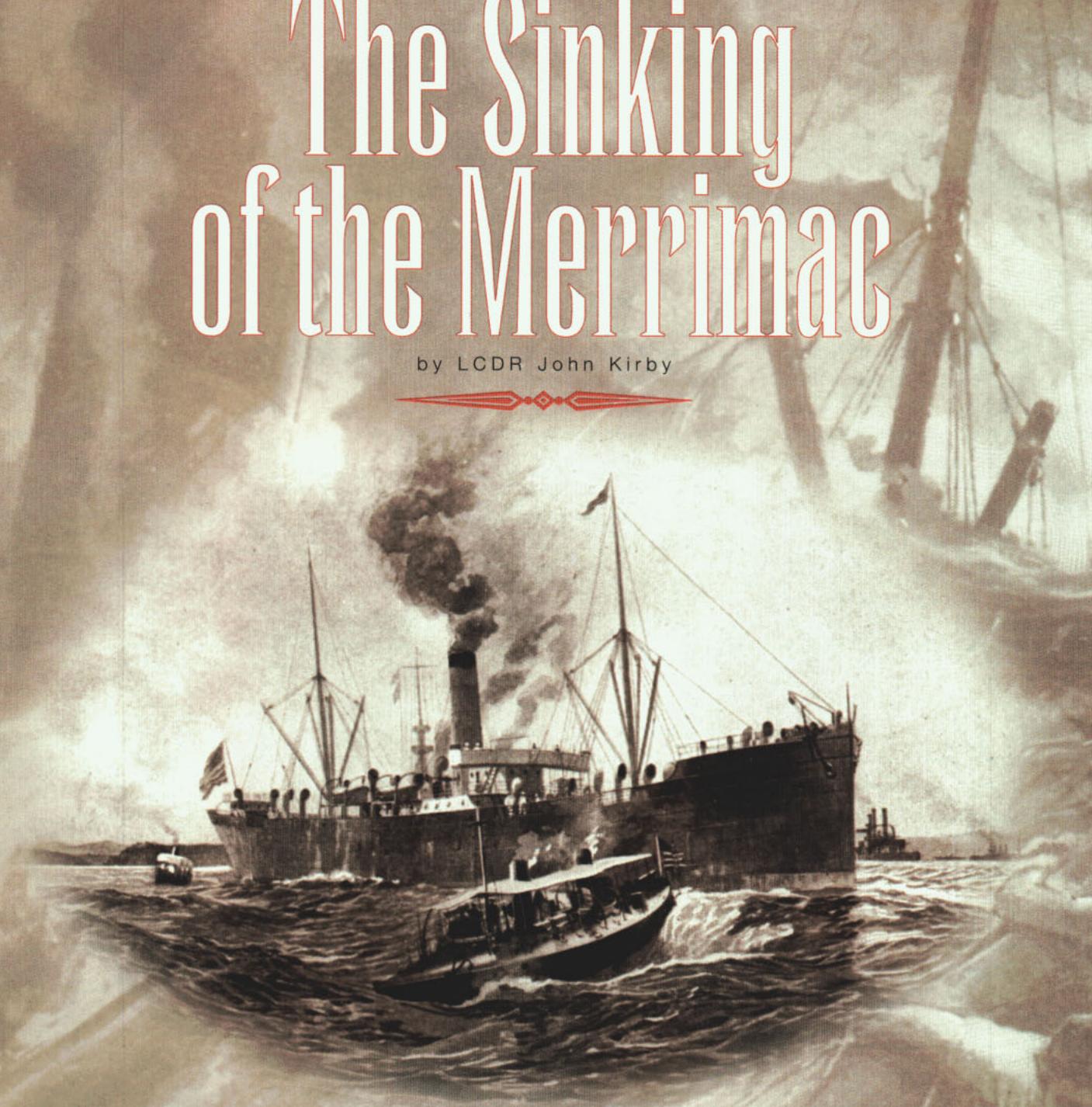
BM2 James Owens studies the unfamiliar world of gas turbine engines en route to his warfare pin.



EW2 (SW) Steven Draper (far right) conducts an impromptu class on electronic warfare.

The Sinking of the Merrimac

by LCDR John Kirby

A detailed illustration of the USS Merrimack, a steamship with two masts and a single funnel, navigating through a stormy sea. The ship is dark-colored with a white funnel and is surrounded by white-capped waves. In the background, the masts and rigging of other ships are visible, suggesting a harbor or a narrow channel. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and the overall atmosphere is one of a dramatic and perilous maritime event.

Early on the morning of June 3, 1898, a U.S. Navy lieutenant and seven brave Sailors drove a broken-down, unarmed collier (coaling ship) into a heavily defended Cuban harbor — and tried to sink her. If all went well, the little ship would go down directly athwart the channel entrance, permanently bottling up the Spanish fleet anchored inside. Some called it a suicide mission.

But the risk was worth taking... if everything went according to plan.

Nothing that morning went according to plan.

Enter the Merrimac

In mid-May of 1898, not long after Dewey's victory in Manila Bay, the Spanish government sent Admiral Pascual Cervera and the Home fleet to the Caribbean with orders to defend Puerto Rico. Instead, Cervera skillfully eluded elements of the U.S. Navy's North Atlantic Squadron and took refuge in Santiago harbor on Cuba's southeast coast. Tucked away like that, Cervera's fleet was harmless enough. But if it escaped, there was no telling how much damage it could do.



Lt. Richmond Pearson Hobson

Arriving off Santiago on June 1st, Admiral William T. Sampson, commander of the North Atlantic Squadron, decided on a swift course of action. Since advancing into the harbor to pick a fight was senseless — the channel was extremely narrow, heavily mined and protected on both sides by formidable shore batteries — Sampson opted to sink a ship athwart the channel entrance, blocking Cervera's escape. If he couldn't get his fleet into the harbor, maybe he could prevent theirs from getting out.

No other ship in Sampson's fleet was more ideal for this mission than *Merrimac*. Displacing more than 3,000 tons and measuring 333 feet in length, she was large enough to completely block the channel (which varied from 300 to 450 feet across), yet small enough to turn inside it. And she'd been nothing but trouble since reporting for duty just a couple of months before. The *Merrimac* broke down so often, in fact, that it was cause for celebration if she steamed for just a few hours without an engine or steering gear problem. At times, noted one observer, the "full engineer force of the [cruiser]

Brooklyn was sent aboard her to get her running again." Though her crew was sharp, the ship itself was a detriment.

Alone by moonlight

Having settled on the *Merrimac* for the blocking ship, Sampson summoned Lieutenant Richmond Pearson Hobson to his cabin and told the 27-year old naval constructor to lead the effort. After some deliberation, Hobson settled on fairly simple plan which called for the *Merrimac* to sail in alone by moonlight on a flood tide. Manning the bridge, Hobson would communicate with his crew by pulling on cords tied to their wrists. One pull meant "Standby;" three pulls was the signal for action.

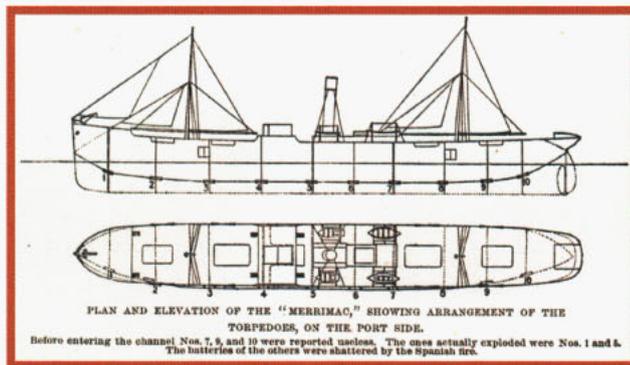
At just the right moment, the forward anchor would be let go, the sea valves below decks opened, the helm thrown to port and a stern anchor released. Once the ship lay across the channel and all his men were safely in a lifeboat, Hobson himself would throw a switch, igniting 10 torpedoes [explosive canisters] strapped to her port side beneath the waterline. The collier was expected to sink within one minute and 15 seconds. "Nothing on this side of New York City will be able to raise her after that," he boasted. That was the plan.

Cheering volunteers

Because of the danger involved, Admiral Sampson wanted only volunteers for the mission. He had no trouble finding them. "Cheering crews from every ship stepped forward at the summons for extra hazardous duty," wrote Associated Press

reporter Henry Beach. "About 300 men from *The New York*, 180 from the *Iowa* — and a like proportion from the other vessels — enthusiastically volunteered for the dangerous assignment." It was even reported that *New York's* bandmaster and several of his musicians begged to go, just so they could play "The Star-Spangled Banner" as the ship went down.

Wanting to risk as few lives as possible, Hobson limited the number of men to seven. He personally selected Gunner's Mate First Class George Charette, whom he knew from his midshipman days. The others were chosen by their respective ships. Coxswain J. C. Murphy represented the *Iowa* after winning a coin toss; Chief Master at Arms Daniel Montague was the unanimous choice of the *New York's* wardroom; Coxswain Randolph Clausen was nominated from the *Texas*; and Coxswain Osborn Warren Deignan, Machinist Mate First Class George Phillips and Water Tender Francis Kelly were kept on from the *Merrimac's* crew.



PLAN AND ELEVATION OF THE "MERRIMAC," SHOWING ARRANGEMENT OF THE TORPEDOES, ON THE PORT SIDE. Before entering the channel Nos. 7, 8, and 10 were reported useless. The ones actually exploded were Nos. 1 and 6. The batteries of the others were shattered by the Spanish fire.

Bad luck and little time

Lieutenant Hobson now turned his full attention to making the final preparations, but time and luck were running short. It was now mid-day on the 1st of June. In order to enter the harbor in complete darkness with a flood tide, the *Merrimac* would have to get underway early on the morning of the 2nd, a little more than 12 hours away. To make matters worse, the

coal heavers who were ordered to empty all the coal from the ship's port bunkers misunderstood their orders and merely shifted it to the starboard side, giving her an ungainly list. Then, the belt lines fastening the torpedoes to the ship's hull became snarled; the stern anchor chain became so badly tangled that a makeshift one had to be fabricated, and the flagship informed Hobson that nowhere amongst the fleet could they find a hand generator capable of remotely detonating the torpedoes. Hurriedly, a few storage batteries and some wire were rounded up.

They were at last ready to go, but the mission was still cursed. Just after midnight on the 2nd, four stowaways were found onboard, and then, shortly after

Seconds of fate

Late into the evening, Hobson reviewed the plan with his men for what seemed like the millionth time. Aside from the lack of a hand generator, everything else was okay.

At 3 a.m. on the 3rd, the collier slipped away quietly from the fleet and headed for the harbor. "It was that calm hour before dawn," wrote a *Boston Herald* reporter who watched the scene, "when life is at its lowest ebb, and the tide runs out, carrying the lives of mortals with it. Slowly, the seconds of fate ticked on as 3,000 men aboard the fleet strained eyes and strove to pierce the deep veil of night."

They didn't have to wait long. When she was still about 500 yards from the

answer. The *Merrimac's* steering gear was gone — shot clean away. Their only hope now was to let the ship's momentum carry her up the channel, use the anchors to swing her into position and fire all the torpedoes at once. Hobson passed the word.

"Lads, they are helping us!"

Slowly and still under heavy fire, the *Merrimac* crawled along. When at last she reached position, Hobson gave three steady pulls to the cords around his men's wrists. Instantly, the order was met by the wonderful sound of the forward anchor dropping and the blast of the first torpedo firing. *Finally, something was going right.* But of the nine remaining torpedoes only one exploded, and then Chief Montague came forward to report that the stern anchor had been shot away with the steering gear.

Still ... if the bow anchor could just hold, they might yet succeed. It didn't. Straining under the great weight of the now sinking ship, the chain parted, casting *Merrimac* adrift.

Suddenly, the night shook with a thunderous roar. "A blasting shock, a lift, a pull, a series of vibrations, and a mine exploded directly beneath us," recalled Hobson. "My heart leaped with exultation. 'Lads, they are helping us!'" he shouted. But the explosion did minimal damage and only helped drive the *Merrimac* aground on the east side of the channel. Hobson knew his mission had failed. "The work was done, and the rest was only a question of time. We could now turn our attention toward the course of action to be taken next."

"Like hell with the lid off"

That course of action was to survive. As the *Merrimac* slowly began to sink, the Spanish fire intensified, precluding any



Merrimac aground and under fire off Estrella Point.

departure, the lifeboat that *Merrimac* towed behind her capsized and sunk. Finally, Sampson recalled the ship. It was just getting too close to sunrise for the mission to proceed. They would try again the next day.

entrance, an enemy picket boat let loose on the *Merrimac*, firing three rounds at close range. Then the shore batteries opened up, raining shells down upon her. At first it seemed that most of the shots had missed, but when Hobson ordered the final course change the helm refused to

Hobson's Crew



Randolph Clausen



George Charette



J.E. Murphy



Daniel Montague



Osborn Warren Deignan



Francis Kelly



George F. Phillips

movement above decks. Broken glass, wood splinters, and shrapnel flew wildly about, accompanied by the barks and booms of howitzers, pistols, rifles and shore guns. To Captain Robley Evans of the *Iowa*, it looked from afar "like hell with the lid off." Lying prone on the deck, helpless and motionless, the men fought off thoughts of death. "The deck vibrated heavily, and we felt the full effect," remembered Hobson. "At each instant it seemed that certainly the next would bring a projectile among us. The impulse surged strong to get away from a place where remaining seemed death." But they all knew that swimming for it was suicide. With the still flooding tide and their white life preservers, they'd be sitting ducks for Spanish sharpshooters. There was nothing left to do but stay with the crippled ship.

All of a sudden, *Merrimac* lurched forward and heeled to port. This was it. Two Spanish warships quickly approached and fired four torpedoes at her, but by then it didn't matter. She was going down fast now. "The vessel lowered her head like a faithful animal, proudly aware of its sacrifice, bowed below the surface, and plunged forward," Hobson noted. As the men tumbled overboard with a great rush of water, her stern rose up, stood shuddering for a moment, and then disappeared beneath the waves. *Merrimac* was dead.

Prisoners in Spanish hands

Coughing up seawater, the men gathered beneath a catamaran raft that was still tethered on one side to the sunken ship. Amazingly, none were seriously hurt. After taking a quick head count, Hobson ordered them all to stay huddled together and quiet, for a Spanish destroyer was still in the area. He felt their only chance for survival lay in being picked up after daylight by a reconnoitering boat from ashore.

"The vessel lowered her head like a faithful animal, proudly aware of its sacrifice, bowed below the surface, and plunged forward."

— Lt. Richmond Pearson Hobson

Just after sunrise a steam launch approached the wreck, probing for signs of life. This was their chance. The men were cold and tired — Hobson knew they couldn't hold out much longer. Bravely, he splashed away from the raft and hailed the boat. At once a squad of riflemen filed out on the boat's bow and took aim at him. "But the volley did not follow," he recalled. "The aim must have been for caution only, and it was apparent that there must have been an officer onboard in control." Indeed there was — it was Admiral Cervera himself. A rescue ensued. In a strange twist of fate, Hobson and his seven volunteers were hoisted to safety by the very admiral whose fleet they were trying

to capture. Now they were prisoners in Spanish hands.

Successful failure

Though *Merrimac's* mission was deemed a failure, it had far-reaching effects. On July 3rd, exactly one month after the sinking, Cervera's fleet was annihilated by ships of the North Atlantic Squadron as it tried to escape from Santiago harbor. Within a week of that battle, the city of Santiago itself surrendered to American ground

forces, leaving the United States in undisputed control of Caribbean waters and paving the way for an invasion of Puerto Rico. Spain sued for peace not long afterward. Had Hobson succeeded in bottling up the Spanish fleet, those very ships could have helped in the defense of Santiago, prolonging the war and providing Spain with a better bargaining position.

On July 6, 1898, Lieutenant Hobson and his crew were released from captivity, returning to a triumphant welcome in America. For their bravery, all eight were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Kirby is the head of still media, Naval Media Center, Washington, D.C. Images courtesy of Naval Institute Press.

Chief has the

World-renowned author and naval enthusiast Tom Clancy once said that he felt the Navy was the one branch of the military that could operate effectively without its officer corps. He was speaking hypothetically. The comment was intended to be the strongest possible endorsement for what he felt to be an exceptional enlisted community. He never thought the Navy would take it so literally. But, during their recent Mediterranean deployment, Sailors aboard USS *Ashland* (LSD 48) did just that.

By J O 2 S h a n e B a r k e r

While getting underway following a port visit to Naples, Italy, *Ashland's* sea and anchor detail was manned by a crew made up entirely of enlisted Sailors. The evolution set in motion a push among the ship's enlisted crew members to train and qualify to stand watches traditionally manned by officers.

The move was applauded by the ship's commanding officer, CDR Antony O. Heimer. "We have some exceptional talent within the enlisted ranks aboard *Ashland*.

I was confident in their ability to get the ship underway safely and professionally. They did it, and they did it with style."

The motivating force behind the all-enlisted detail was Chief Signalman (SW) Steven G. Lominac of Virginia Beach, Va. Having qualified as officer-of-the-deck (OOD) underway while serving aboard USS *George Washington* (CVN 73), Lominac was encouraged to qualify as an OOD aboard *Ashland*. With the experience he gained aboard *GW* and during his

follow-on tour as a tug captain, Lominac was confident he could qualify.

"Driving tugs teaches you everything you need to know about handling, docking and undocking ships," he said. "I learned from the best harbor pilots in the world at the Norfolk Naval Base."

To help his signalmen diversify their professional expertise, Lominac developed a new personal qualification standard (PQS) for the junior officer-of-the-deck watch so enlisted Sailors could have the

qualification added to their service record. Following Lominac's example, crew members began to pursue qualifications of their own. Signalmen First Class (SW) Michael W.T. Wilson, *Ashland's* 1997 Sailor of the Year, was the first to step forward.

The Rochester, N.Y., native worked through the new PQS using his knowledge as an enlisted surface warfare specialist, but he admitted, "Even that didn't cover everything. There were a lot of things that

"Generally, I'm just worried about one aspect of navigation," explained the Statesville, N.C., native. "This time, I had to worry about shipping and a lot of other things. It gives you a different perspective."

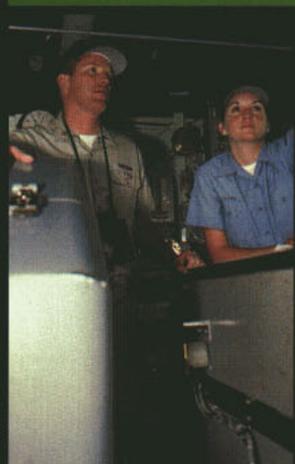
Blackburn added that by opening the qualifications and watchstanding duties to more junior Sailors, job performance and chances for advancement improve.

"We want to keep moving our junior Sailors up, up, up. That way, they never get

according to CDR Heimer, is to qualify enlisted watchstanders, but not at the expense of his junior officers who are required to qualify at their watchstations. But, if the initiative is a success, the reward could be a larger number of qualified watchstanders, which means watchstanders will be well-rested and the crew more diversified. Heimer has no intention of slowing down now, not when the benefits of the program are so obvious.



SM1 (SW) Michael Wilson of Rochester, N.Y., stands watch as the conning officer on the bridge of USS *Ashland* (LSD 48). Wilson is *Ashland's* 1997 Sailor of the Year.



SMC (SW) Steven G. Lominac of Virginia Beach, Va., stands watch as the officer-of-the-deck while QM3 Melissa A. Webster of Bedford, Ind., acts as bearing recorder on the USS *Ashland* (LSD 48).



QMC (SW) Ronald L. Blackburn of Statesville, N.C., stands watch as the ship's navigator while QM3 Melissa A. Webster acts while bearing recorder.

I had either learned and forgotten or had just never learned before. By doing that PQS, I learned a lot more about how this ship has to be handled. It's not just as easy as giving an order or the helmsman steering the ship left and right. It was a good professional growth tool for me."

While standing watch as the ship's navigation supervisor, Chief Quartermaster (SW) Ronald L. Blackburn learned there is more to driving a ship than just plotting a straight course.

stagnant. The more challenges you give them, the more willing they are to accept them. Sailors are happiest when you challenge them."

"Because the command allowed the crew to move up a notch and assume some of these watches, people are walking around with their heads lifted high and they are taking even more pride in their work," added Chief Operations Specialist (SW) Robert Best of New York, N.Y.

The challenge to this initiative,

"We've definitely raised the bar," said Heimer. "It's worked its way down where we've had second and third class petty officers jump in to qualify at these watchstations. I want to continue this because it gives everyone a chance to stand these different watches and, I think, gives the crew a sense of pride that they can run this ship themselves."

Barker is assigned to the public affairs office aboard USS *Ashland* (LSD 48).

Eye on the Fleet

EYE ON THE FLEET

is a monthly photo feature sponsored by

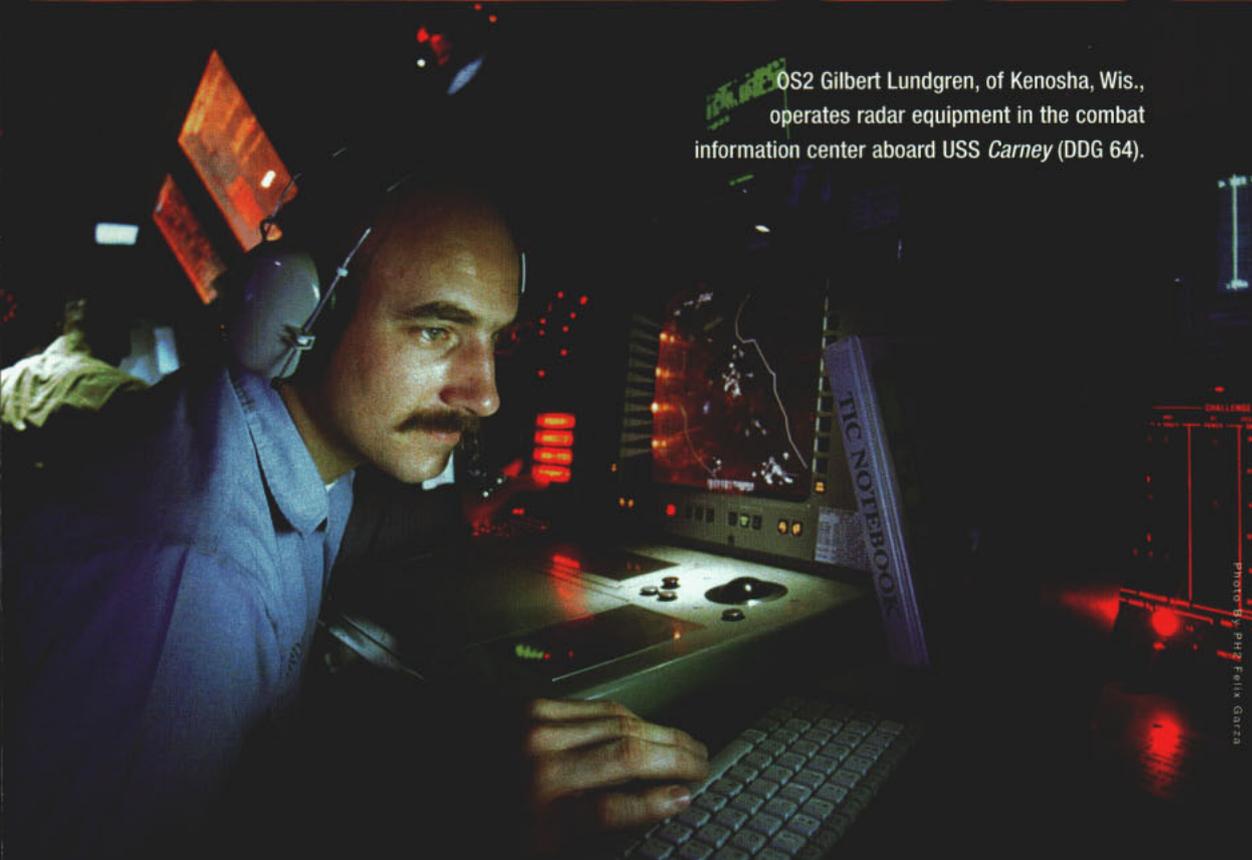
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HIGH IMPACT,

photography from SAILORS in the fleet, to showcase the American



GM3 Walter Vanderhorst, of Queens, N.Y., loads projectiles into the 5-inch gun aboard the Spruance-class - destroyer USS *John Young* (DD 973).



OS2 Gilbert Lundgren, of Kenosha, Wis., operates radar equipment in the combat information center aboard USS *Carney* (DDG 64).

Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

ALL HANDS



the Chief of Information,
quality

Sailor in **ACTION.**



Photo By PH2 Joseph Quast III

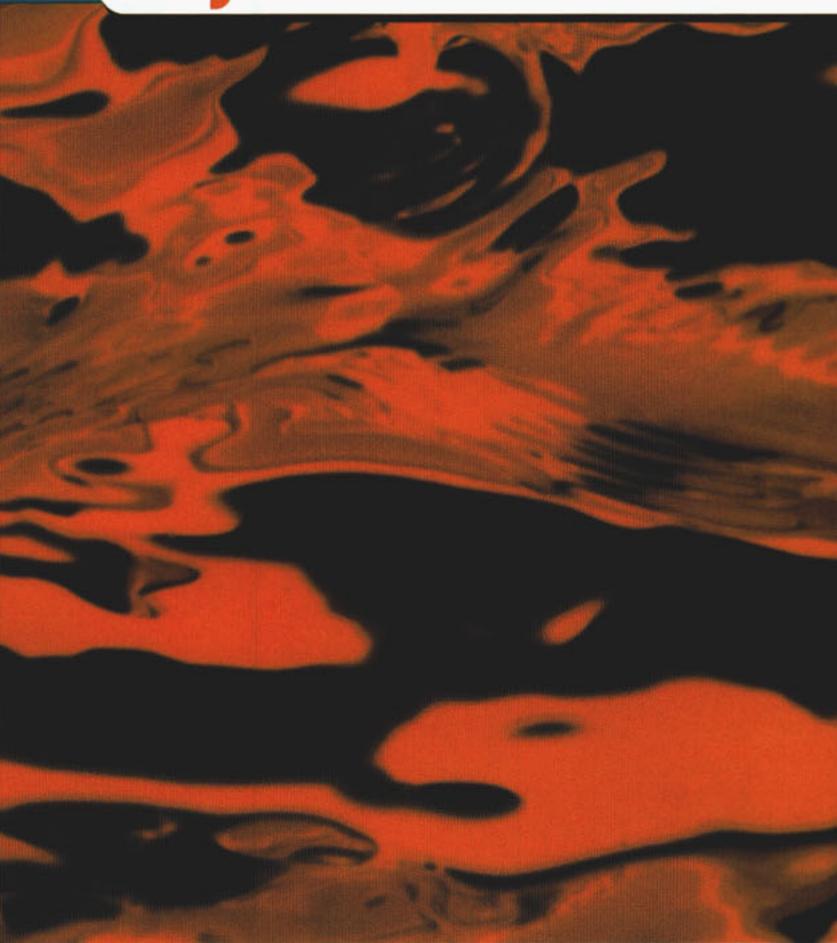
DC2 Danna Sewell of Richmond, Va., helps a member of the repair locker don his "oxygen breathing apparatus" during a general quarters drill aboard USS *La Salle* (AGF 3).



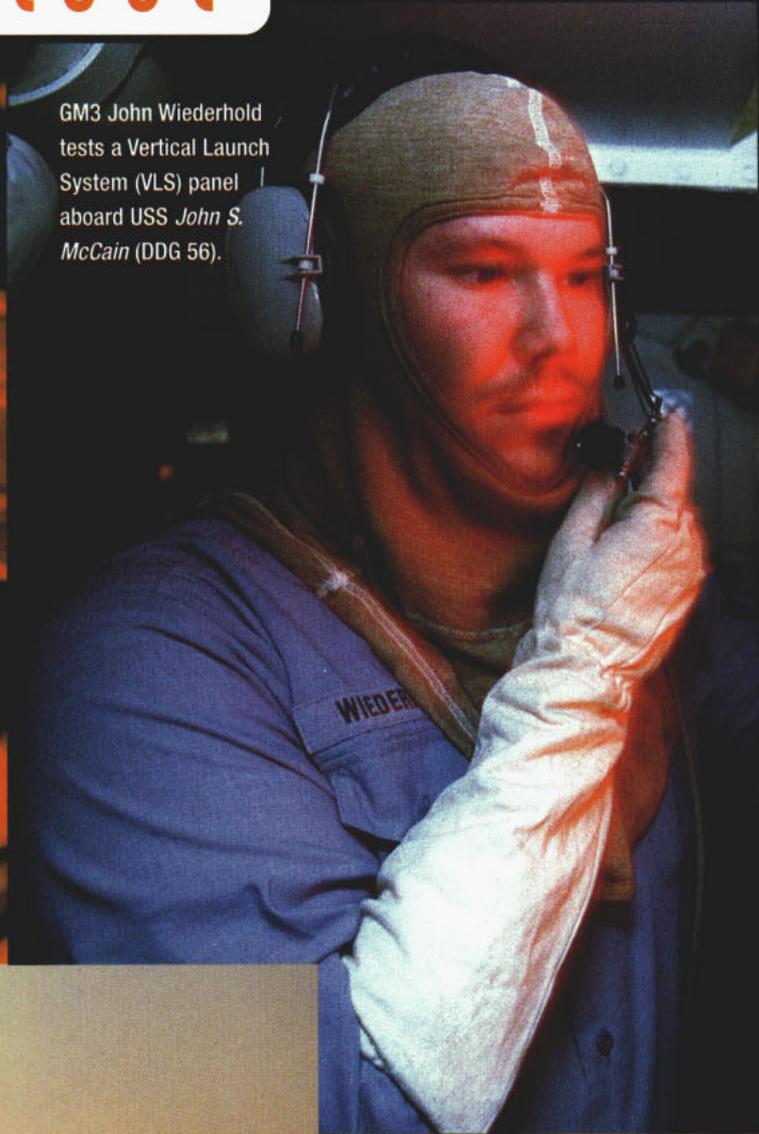
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Eye on the Fleet



GM3 John Wiederhold tests a Vertical Launch System (VLS) panel aboard USS *John S. McCain* (DDG 56).



CWO Melvin White, of Virginia Beach, Va., works out in his off time aboard USS *Normandy* (CG 60).

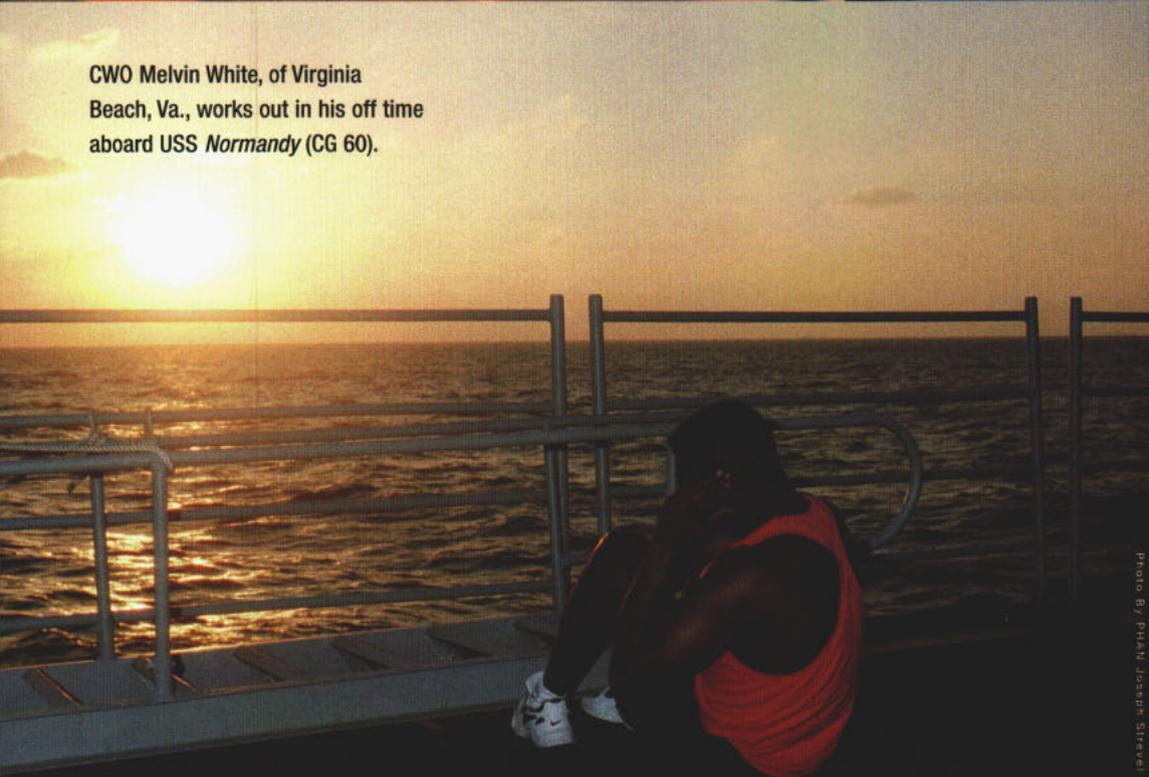


Photo By PHA/ Joseph Stravel



ALL HANDS

U.S. Navy guided-missile cruiser USS *Lake Champlain* (CG 57) conducts Precision Alignment Correction Fire (PACFIRE) exercises off the port bow with the 5-inch, MK 45 gun.

Photo By PH3 Clinton C. Beard



AN Brian Nestby, from Dubuque, Iowa, stores a firefighting hose after a fire drill on the flight deck of USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) as USS *Normandy* (CG 60) steams alongside.

Photo By PH2 Felix Garza

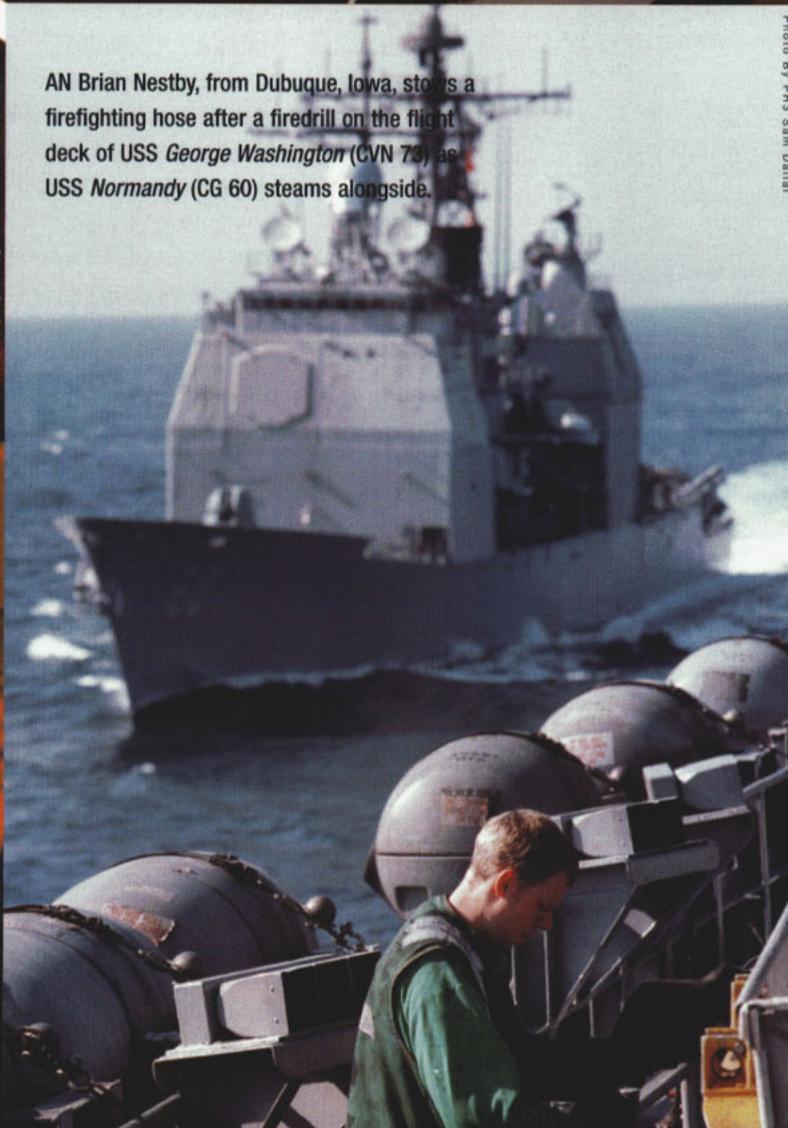
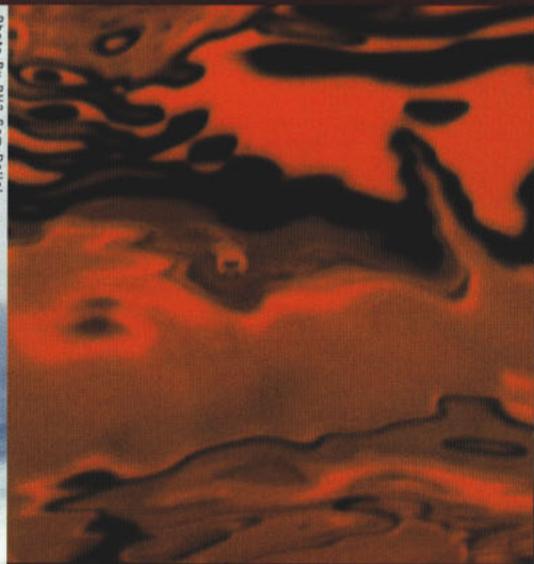
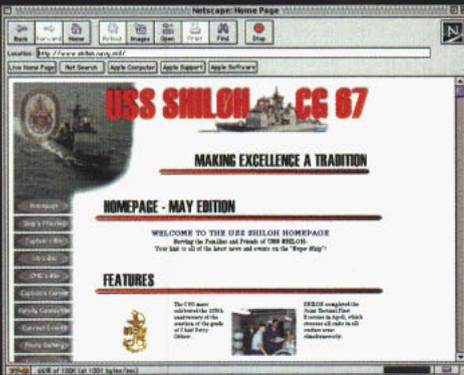


Photo By PH3 Sam Dattila

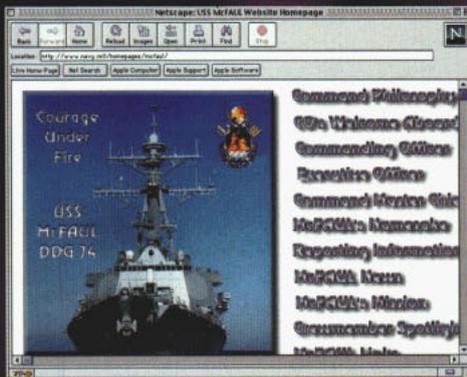


Cyber Sailor

SHIPS



USS Shiloh website



USS McFaul website



USS John S. McCain website

It seems like every site has an award nowadays. You've seen 'em. Cruising the net, you can always find those little logos proclaiming that a particular site has just been named among the top 100 in ... whatever! Kid's games, schools, job searches, household pets, web-based merchandising ... you name it. I don't pretend to know what it all means, but, hey, a page featuring a classy logo and a statement saying it is listed in "Frank's Top 100 Horticultural Sites" lends a bit of credibility. Don't you think?

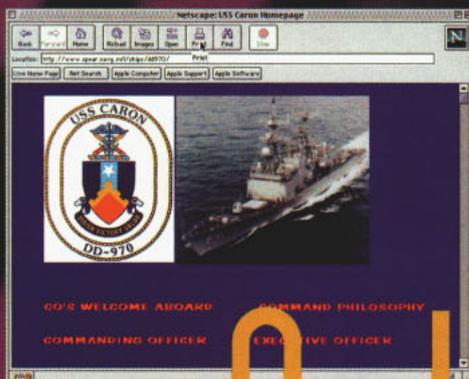
Well, I've decided to get into the act myself. Announcing the all-new and, I'm sure, much sought-after "CyberSailor Site of Excellence" award (that's the coveted CSSOE, pronounced kes-o-e, for all of you keeping score at home).

My honor will designate those sites which have, through innovative design and thorough content, succeeded in meeting my standards of unrelenting excellence. That is to say, my logo proclaims to all who care, "I LIKE IT!"

Okay, so much for the grand announcement, let's get down to Round 1. This month, we'll take a look at the offerings of the Navy's cruisers, destroyers and frigates. For this issue, I reviewed 130 sites — that's all I could find. (That's a hint, webmasters, if your ship has a web site, send me the URL at the address at the top of the page.)

Can I be honest? I immediately eliminated all ship web sites that haven't been updated for the past six to 12 months. Why? Well, because these are MY awards, and because this is the Internet after all — if you can't keep it updated, why bother?

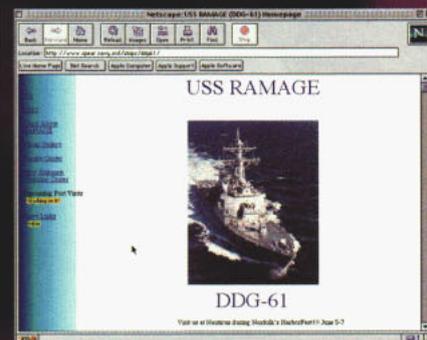
Now, please be forewarned, I've incorporated some personal likes and dislikes into my selections, but as I said before, these are MY awards. For example, I LIKE sites with interesting information and vivid photographs. I DISLIKE sites with pictures of the CO, XO and that stern-faced command master chief greeting me on the opening page. I apologize to these important folks and I realize they are vital to the web site's existence, but they really should be accessed via links — don't paste 'em on the homepage.



USS Caron website



USS Russell web site



USS Ramage web site

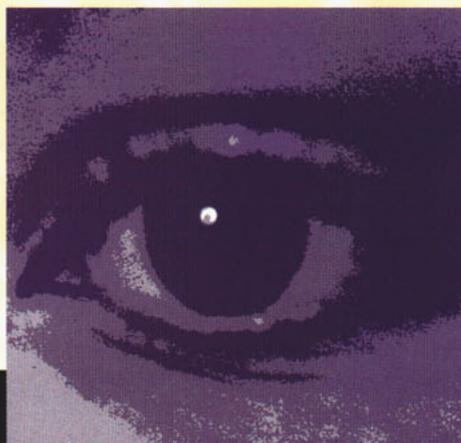
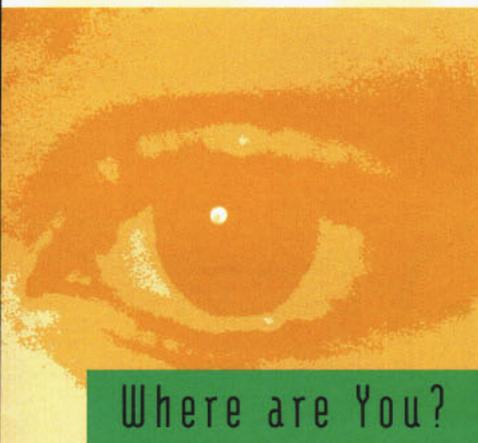
A H O Y !

Sorry, but glitzy animated graphics don't guarantee selection, unless they are used sparingly and add to the overall design (without making me wait too long).

A total of eight sites make the first cut. Of these, seven stood out simply because they offer a special page just for Sailors preparing to report aboard. These sites are USS *Russell* (DDG 59) at <http://www.russell.navy.mil>; USS *Ramage* (DDG 61) at <http://www.spear.navy.mil/ships/ddg61>; USS *Anzio* (CG 68) at <http://www.spear.navy.mil/ships/cg68>; USS *Caron* (DD 970) at <http://www.spear.navy.mil/ships/dd970>; USS *Thomas S. Gates* (CG 51) at <http://www.spear.navy.mil/ships/cg51/index.html>; USS *McFaul* (DDG 74) at <http://www.navy.mil/homepages/mcfaul>; and USS *John S. McCain* (DDG 56) at <http://www.mccain.navy.mil>. A bonus site, USS *Shiloh* (CG 67) (<http://www.shiloh.navy.mil>) was added because of the site's overall clean, neat and interesting design.

Every one of the 130 sites I visited offered information about the ship, her capabilities and general information on her history. But, do you ever ask yourself what other reasons folks may have for visiting a ship's website? What about families and friends who want to find out what the Sailors onboard are up to? And how about those people who want to learn what it's like to work and live onboard ship? I talk to webmasters everyday, specifically those at the larger shore stations, and I've found that Sailors are beginning to use the web as a way to learn about the duty stations their detailers are talking about. Boy, it sure would be nice to be able to find out about a ship, its crew and its homeport all in one place.

So there you have it, the first round of the CSSOEs. In the next few issues, I'll wander the net in search of carriers, amphibians, auxiliaries and minesweepers. If your ship has a site you think is worth stopping by, e-mail me and let me know the URL.



Where are You?

Shipboard webmasters, for the most part, are volunteers who have developed their HTML-ese during their off-duty time. Knowing what gets priority for funding aboard ship, I would also assume that many of them are using their own machines and software.

I salute all you Sailors who have taken on the job of putting your command's best foot forward. I also have a favor to ask.

I'd like to keep the readers of *All Hands* informed of Navy web sites that keep Sailors and their families up-to-date on the latest technology and happenings around the fleet. But I can't do it alone and search engines do have their limitations.

If you're maintaining a site, or know of one, that is designed to tell your command's story, tell me about it! I'd sure like to shed some light on those diamonds in the rough.

Shipmates



Hull Technician 2nd Class (SW) Joe Towles

was selected as USS *Emory S. Land's* (AS 39) 1997 Junior Sailor of the Year. As the ship's repair parts petty officer, the Gladstone, Va., native keeps track of more than \$10,000 in repair parts needed for the ship and her submarines. Towles is also the assistant divisional career counselor and the fire party on-scene leader for his duty section.



Mary Jo Cervantes

was selected as the 1997 Civilian of the Year for Naval Air Reserve Station Point Mugu, Calif. While serving as team leader for the command's security process action team. She provided administrative rate training on security-related matters and helped command personnel study for advancement examinations.



Gas Turbine System Technician (Mechanical) 1st Class (SW) Wayne H. Gale

from Fleet Training Center (FTC) Mayport, Fla., was selected for the Enlisted Commissioning Program. Additionally, he was selected as the FTC Instructor of the Year for 1997, Instructor of the Quarter and Sailor of the Quarter (for the 4th quarter of 1997).



Seaman (SW) Clorinda Ortega

was selected as USS *Simon Lake's* (AS 33) 1997 Seaman of the Year. Ortega, a native of San Mateo, N.M., is the deck department's repair parts petty officer and works as a "sponsor" aiding newly-reported seamen in adjusting to life onboard ship.



Engineman 1st Class (SW) Tearance W. Bauer

was recently named USS *Shamal's* (PC 13) 1997 Sailor of the Year. The Merced, Calif., native was recognized for his outstanding leadership, professionalism and motivation as a main propulsion assistant, department leading petty officer, chief master at arms and acting damage control assistant.



Radioman First Class (SW) Erica Dobbs

was named Allied Command Atlantic's Military Member of the Year for 1997. The Hartwell, Ga., native is the Technical Control Facilities leading petty officer, database manager and circuit supervisor at NATO's North American headquarters, Norfolk, Va.

Break Away!



Motto: Don't Tread On Me
Breakaway Song: Born To Be Wild
Homeport: Mayport



Motto: Honor and Glory
Breakaway Song: Eye of the Tiger
Homeport: San Diego



Motto: Intrepide Impelle (Fearlessly Forward)
Breakaway Song: Along the Watchtower
Homeport: San Diego



Motto: First Among the Finest
Breakaway Song: Slipping into Darkness
Homeport: Everett



Motto: Successum Merere Conemur (Endevor to Succeed)
Breakaway Song: Bad to the Bone
Homeport: Yokosuka



Motto: Never Give In
Breakaway Song: Johnny B. Good
Homeport: San Diego



Motto: Job Well Done
Breakaway Song: Hawaii Five-0 Theme
Homeport: Pearl Harbor



Motto: Making Excellence a Tradition
Breakaway Song: Proud to be an American
Homeport: San Diego

DD 21 WILL BE A MULTI-MISSION SHIP, CAPABLE OF PROVIDING FORWARD PRESENCE AND DETERRENCE, WHILE OPERATING AS

MUNITIONS, 155MM HOWITZERS AND A LAND ATTACK MISSILE SYSTEM, SHE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT UP TO 200 MILES INLAND.

A VITAL PART OF NAVAL JOINT AND COMBINED MARITIME FORCES TO GAIN BATTLESPACE DOMINANCE IN LITTORAL OPERATIONS. DD 21'S PRIMARY MISSION WILL BE

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ALL HANDS

U.S. Navy

July 1966

